Saturday Review

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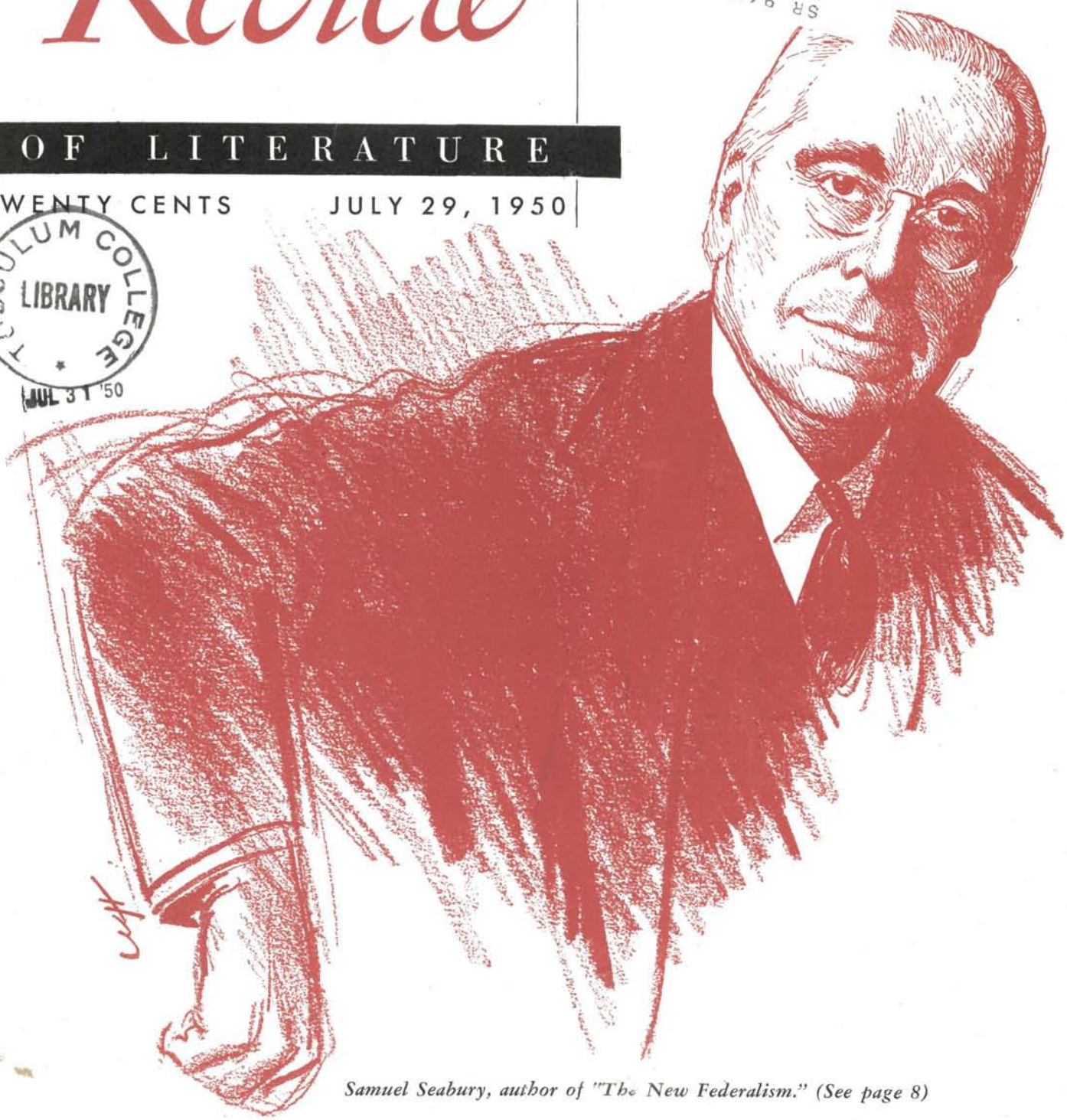

Samuel Seabury, author of "The New Federalism." (See page 8)

The Roots of Jazz
By C. E. SMITH

Berlin Carries On
By EVERETT HELM

(See Recordings Section, page 33)

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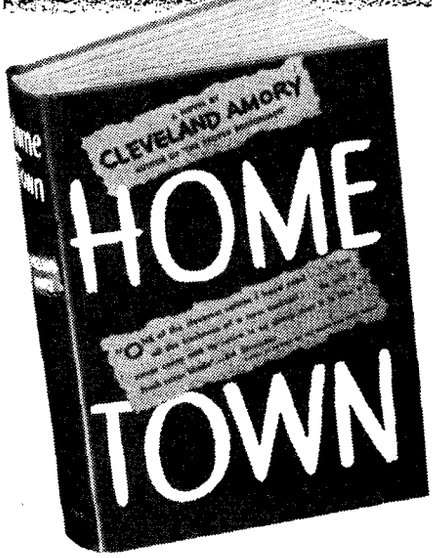

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July 29, 1950

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Features Page

NATIONAL SECURITY & THE SCIENTIST
By Henry D. Smyth..... 6

SRL RECORDINGS FOR AUGUST.....33

Reviews

THE NEW FEDERALISM
Reviewed by Morris L. Ernst..... 8

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION
Reviewed by Roger Baldwin..... 9

GANDHI'S LETTERS TO A DISCIPLE
Reviewed by Pierre van Paassen..10

SCIENCE AND ENGLISH POETRY
Reviewed by Donald A. Stauffer....10

DEMOCRACY IN POLITICS AND ECONOMICS
Reviewed by T. V. Smith.....11

A TABLE NEAR THE BAND
Reviewed by Hollis Alpert.....12

THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES, 1950
Reviewed by Edward J. Fitzgerald..13

THE DEAD STAY YOUNG
Reviewed by Robert Pick.....14

CHANGING EMPIRE
Reviewed by William H. Stevenson..15

A SEGMENT OF MY TIMES
Reviewed by Alvin Johnson.....16

HARVEY CUSHING
Reviewed by Martin Gumpert.....16

NEVER MARRY A RANGER
Reviewed by Pamela Taylor.....17

GRANDMA DID IT THIS WAY
Reviewed by Ann F. Wolfe.....18

SHADOW ON THE HEARTH
Reviewed by Harrison Smith.....24

MAIDEN VOYAGE
Reviewed by Nathan L. Rothman..25

Departments

TRADE WINDS
By Bennett Cerf..... 4

LITERARY I.Q.....18

EDITORIAL 20

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....21

SEEING THINGS
By John Mason Brown.....22

LITERARY CRYPT.....25

THE CRIMINAL RECORD.....28

DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 853.....32

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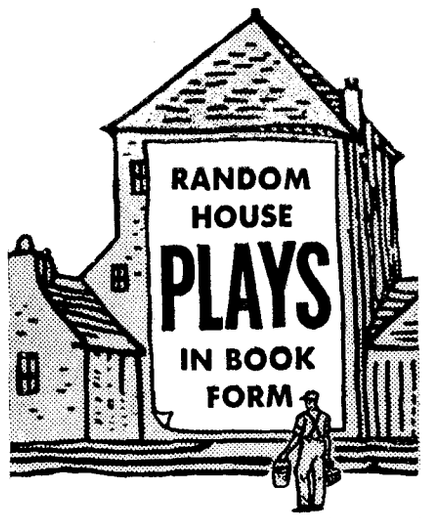

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TRADE Winds

GRAVE DEVELOPMENTS in Korea brought book publishers back on the double from their Maine fishing camps, Scotch shooting boxes, and Vermont dream houses to their offices in New York, where they felt even sorrier for themselves than usual and hastily reappraised their fall plans. Would even a partial return to a wartime economy mean paper quotas again? And frozen salaries? And shipping restrictions? And possibly—they could dream, couldn't they?—sell-outs of any kind of junk between covers within a week of publication? Everything was still too indefinite and confused to reveal a distinct trend but one prediction seems justifiable: some of those newly planned, very low-priced series will have to be seriously curtailed or moth-balled entirely for the duration.

Are book prices already too high? I wondered about this when I saw the tariff on my orchestra ticket for Mike Todd's "Peep Show": $7.20. This vulgar, sub-Minsky burlesque show—the kind you're ashamed to be seen skulking away from when the final curtain falls—has two redeeming features: a pair of wonderful Argentinian jugglers and a comic named "Peanuts" Mann, who can certainly beat the hell out of a bass drum. If that's worth $7.20 a ticket, a copy of "Pilgrim's Progress" still rates a dollar and a quarter—and the Columbia University Press's poll of "most boring classics" be blowed. As for Mr. Todd's array of undraped chorines, the lot of them aren't as titillating as the cover of one run-of-the-mill quarter reprint. . . .

A NEW FIRM with more than usual promise will make its bow on Publisher's Row next week: Smith, Cartmell & Schwab, all alumni of the Garden City division of the Doubleday organization, have set up their own shop at 200 Fifth Ave., New York. Their announced intention is to confine their activities to being exclusive sales representatives for the juveniles of Lowe, Inc. (published under the trade name of John Martin's House) and the nonfiction items on the Greystone list. It's my guess, however, that a high-powered trio like this will not be able to resist for long the lure and excitement of publishing some new items of their own.

Van Cartmell is one of my oldest friends in the publishing business so you'll pardon me for writing about him first. The market crash of 1929 turned him outwardly from a member of the Stock Exchange to a specialist in reprints; in his heart Van was, is, and will remain a thespian. He has played more than fifty star roles for the Amateur Comedy Club and even sneaked in a couple of professional jobs in Hollywood when he thought none of us was looking. His brain-children at Garden City include "Birds of America," the Rockwell Kent "Shakespeare" and "Decameron," and a number of popular play anthologies, for which he enlisted the collaboration of a notable whose name escapes me at the moment. According to Van's lovely wife, Emmy, he is, furthermore, the best-looking gent on Long Island and one of the most irritating Canasta partners. His new associates already regard him as the Grand Old Man of the outfit. Papa Hemingway may be followed by Papa Cartmell.

Vin Smith's first association with the world of books was in a retail capacity. On the present site of the Hollywood Theatre at Fifty-first St. and Broadway he conducted an operation that stayed open daily until 3:00 A.M., and hypoed trade with the first penny-book sale in history. When the building was razed Vin entered the lucrative remainder field, publishing on the side some "limited editions" with Clara Tice's illustrations under the colophon of the Art Studio Press. In the Depression days he drifted into the roofing business, where Walter O'Keefe, Doubleday's demon talent scout, unearthed him in 1937. He began as a Sun Dial salesman; ten years later he was vice president of Garden City.

Vic Schwab is also an O'Keefe discovery. Deceivingly youthful in appearance (many mistake him for Van's son), he broke into bookselling in 1927—at the age of sixteen—in a South Carolina hamlet. His system involved circulating a worn copy of *The Times Book Review* among the limited local circle of sophisticates, promoting orders for books lauded therein, ordering them from the American News Co. at a 33-1/3-percent discount, and billing them to his customers at 20 per cent less than the established retail price. An un-

"What I wouldn't give to be a kid again back in reform school."

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satisfactory net (his biggest week showed a profit of $4.20) and discovery of his modus operandi by the News Co. put an end to this interesting venture, and Vic descended upon New York, where, as salesman for such diverse enterprises as L. C. Page and Macaulay, he learned things about the book business he himself hasn't been able to digest as yet. At Garden City he was head of the specialty sales department.

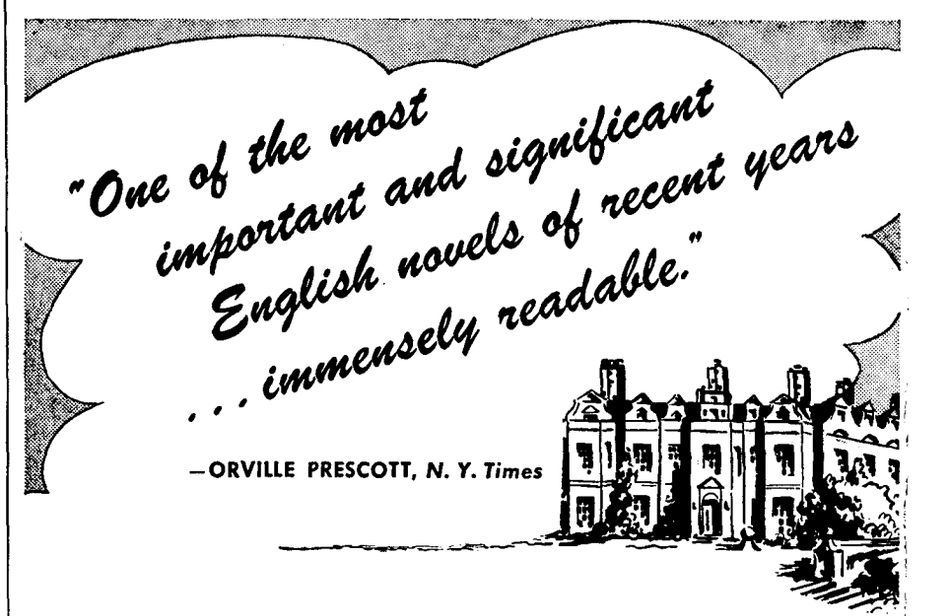
Faced with the simultaneous loss of these three key operatives, Doubleday hurriedly repaired the dikes by naming Charlie Marshall sales manager of Garden City and Mel Evans editor-in-chief. The fact that both of them are extremely able and popular is of particular interest to this correspondent, who happens to have a new collection of stories, called "Laughter Incorporated," on the fall Garden City list. . . .

WITH FURTHER REFERENCE to Smith, Cartmell & Schwab, the fact that the first names of all three partners—Vin, Van and Vic—begin with the letter "V" reminded one grizzled old observer of the year 1913, when the all-conquering best seller was a now-forgotten novel called "V. V.'s Eyes." Its author, Henry Sydnor Harrison, is equally neglected these days, though by virtue of "V. V.'s Eyes" and his preceding triumph, "Queed," he once was regarded as a leading literary light of the country. He was destined to write four more books before he died in 1930, of which only two, "Angela's Business" and "Saint Teresa," achieved any success whatever.

For the best 100-word summary of "V. V.'s Eyes" (for the life of me, I can't remember a word of it) TRADE WINDS will award one square inch of Alfred Knopf's most splendiferous flaming-orange golf sweater, swiped from his locker on July 3, 1950. . . .

THERE ARE OTHER important midsummer changes in the literary scene. After twenty-six years of distinguished service at Macmillan Jim Putnam is out as associate editor, supposedly another victim of L'Affaire Velikovsky. He is far too valuable an editor to be at liberty for long. Meanwhile, the trade awaits an official explanation of the dropping of Velikovsky's "Worlds in Collision" from the Macmillan list at a time when it was the nation's number-one nonfiction best seller. Is it true that a group of professors brought pressure to bear upon the Macmillan textbook department? And, if so, by what authority did they assume the role of censor? College professors should be in the vanguard of forces battling censorship of any kind, not organizing a minor "witch-hunt" of their own. . . . Edwin Seaver, anthologist and former executive of the BOMC and Book Find Club, is headed for an important post in the advertising department of Little, Brown. . . . McGraw-Hill is dropping its Whittlesey House imprint for all but certain juvenile and special publications. The title "Whittlesey House" was an inspiration of the late Guy Holt, who was instrumental also in giving the John Day Company its name. . . . Hiram Haydn has deserted Crown to become New York editor of Bobbs-Merrill. . . . Lulu Teeter of the Lazarus Bookshop in Columbus is dead but hundreds of her friends in the trade will cherish her memory in their hearts. A fund is being raised in her name to provide rare books for the Ohioana Library, one of her favorite projects. Checks should be made payable to the Lulu S. Teeter Memorial Fund and sent to Mrs. Minnie Louden at the Lazarus Bookshop. . . . The literary world also was saddened by the loss of Carl Van Doren, Dixon Wecter, Jean Lawlor, and Lowell Brentano. . . . Joe Jackson has received an honorary degree from USC. In his cap and gown he was the most dazzling sight afforded Los Angeles since Bill Saroyan first grew his walrus mustache. . . . And, believe it or not, Carl Sandburg is negotiating for a job as soloist at a Greenwich Village night club. *Variety*, which is never—well, almost never—wrong, says that he made such a hit with his folk songs as a guest artist at the Village Vanguard he is to be billed as the star attraction when it reopens in the fall. Among those who will be there to cheer for him on opening night will be

—BENNETT CERF.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"A long and satisfying novel. . . . There are only a few writers today who could compass the wealth of material in this book with so much vitality and continuing interest."—HARRISON SMITH, *Saturday Review Syndicate*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

National Security & the Scientist

HENRY D. SMYTH

—*Acme.*

Henry D. Smyth

NO MAN is better qualified to discuss the all-important subject of the place of science in a free society than Henry D. Smyth, author of the famous Smyth report on atomic energy and now a commissioner of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. Before his appointment to the commission, Dr. Smyth had served as a professor and chairman of the Department of Physics at Princeton for a dozen years. His important service during World War II as a consultant on war-research projects to the National Research Council and the Office of Scientific Research and Development was climaxed by the publication in 1945 of the official War Department report on atomic bombs, "Atomic Energy for Military Purposes" (the formal title of the so-called Smyth report). Commissioner Smyth has drawn from two addresses he gave recently—one before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the other the Harlan Fiske Stone address at Amherst College—to write the accompanying article on modern science, a free society, and the rules under which the scientist today is restricted in his right to freedom of expression. *The Saturday Review* believes that these remarks, by a scientist who has said that if he had to choose between freedom and science he would choose freedom, are of particular pertinence at this time.

THERE HAS been a great deal of talk in the last few years about the need for freedom in science. Let us consider honestly whether freedom of science is just an agreeable tradition or is, in fact, necessary for its vigor. Let us discard the motivations of pure science and consider science merely as a direct contributor to our military and industrial technology. If we assume this position we must still consider the kind of people scientists have always been and the conditions which have always been necessary for creative work. The inescapable conclusion is that a free society is necessary to creative science and therefore to technology.

The totalitarian regime in Nazi Germany hardly lasted long enough to demonstrate completely the effect of such a regime on science and technology in general. However, a study of the reasons for the failure in Germany to develop an atomic bomb will reveal how party politics, limitation of criticism, exaggerated national conceit, and racial intolerance can strangle even technology. The Soviet regime has shown us so far only that it is possible with determined effort and a good spy system to obtain a particular device, the atomic bomb, that has already been proved workable by others. It will be interesting to see how far the Russians will get in their attempts to apply theories of genetics based on Party fanaticism rather than on scientific evidence. I believe I know the answer.

Some of the things that happened in Germany and are happening in Russia could happen here. They will, unless we face squarely the troubles in which American science finds itself today and work constantly to keep them within bounds. We are in a dilemma that is not confined to science and technology but is more acute there than elsewhere. It can be simply stated by the questions: How much should we talk? Or, how much talk should be permitted? Everyone is agreed that the technological details of atomic bombs and other weapons should be kept secret; everyone is agreed that the public should be informed on technical matters that affect public policy; everyone is agreed that we must continue to teach students the principles of science without restriction and that scientific research and publication are fine things that should be fostered generally. Everyone agrees that freedom of speech is something we would fight to defend. And everyone agrees that the 60,000 employees of the Atomic Energy Commission and its contractors should not have complete freedom of speech.

As a member of the Atomic Energy Commission, I am daily confronted by this dilemma. On the whole the course pursued seems to me to have been wise. In the public, in Congress, and in the Administration there are extremists on both sides who are dissatisfied and vocal. This is normal and proper in a democracy and this problem of secrecy is one that needs constant review and debate such as can occur only in a free society or, perhaps I should say, in a nearly free society. However, one could wish that the debate did not sometimes become hysterical in tone and selfish in motive and that the indirect costs were not so high.

SO FAR as our secrecy policy affects the content of science, it seems to me that we have set up a procedure that works well though a little slowly. Undoubtedly, research in nuclear science in this country would go ahead better if more were published and this, incidentally, would strengthen our long-term military position. Possibly we have occasionally released tidbits of information of short-term value to our enemy which we might better have kept to ourselves. There is an endless series of technical judgments that have to be made. None is likely to be clear cut or important by itself. There is no one secret which by itself is of overwhelming importance. The best thing we can do is to balance the advantages of revealing information to our own people against the dangers of

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giving that information to a potential enemy. In doing this we must remember that our future strength in military technology cannot depend entirely on work in secret Government laboratories. It will certainly depend also on the vitality of our educational program, on the research of innumerable university and industrial laboratories, and on the progressiveness of our industrial technology. A policy of exaggerated secrecy would destroy the very strength it was intended to protect.

The indirect effects of our secrecy policy are more subtle and, therefore, more dangerous. I am concerned by the extraordinary exaggeration given to the importance of secrecy in the public mind. We must not accept the false notion that the safety of the country depends on espionage laws, loyalty oaths, and FBI investigations, and that the more of these you have the more secure you make the country's future. Some degree of such measures is necessary in certain areas, of course. I have worked in such an area for most of the last ten years, so that I believe I know all sides of the problem. I assure you that these measures are evil and enervating, for they are against the traditions both of science and of the free society in which we live. Let us keep these police measures to a minimum and not allow panic or politics to extend them to areas where they are not needed. Our future depends on the strength of our free institutions and free men, even including free scientists. In science, in technology, and in political action we must depend not on negative restrictions but on positive achievement.

But we do have to take into account all the evil effects of secrecy outside the fields of science and technology. In particular, we must realize that our whole system of government assumes that the people should be kept informed. We should not pursue a foreign policy that might lead us into war without letting the people know what such a war might mean and what are our chances of victory. We should not spend billions of dollars of the taxpayers' money without giving them some idea how their money is spent. Yet neither our war plans nor the details of our armaments should be published. The voters certainly do not want that. They know that 150 million people cannot keep a secret and that a certain amount of secrecy is of paramount importance.

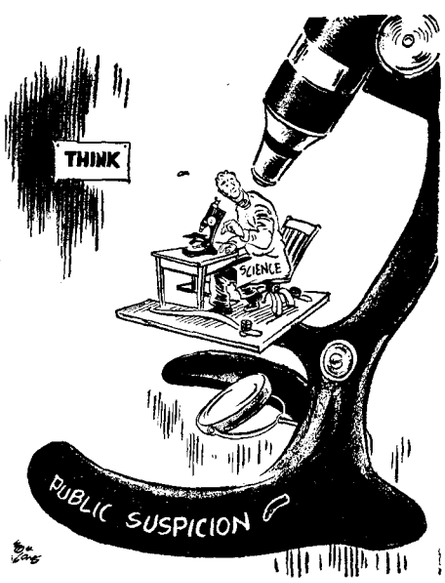
Thus secrecy is an important element of preparation for military defense and yet it is subversive of democracy and science. This contradiction is recognized in the McMahon Act, which attempts to define a reasonable compromise and puts the responsibility for further definition and administration on the Atomic Energy Commission. This law gives to the Commission an unprecedented responsibility and authority because it recognizes fully the dilemma in which we find ourselves.

—*Justus in* The Minneapolis Star.

"The Laboratory's By-Product."

—*Burck in* Chicago Sun-Times.

"Can You Top This?



—*Scott Long in* Minneapolis Tribune.

Traditionally, science has been international and completely free. Technology, or applied science, has been less so, and military technology still less so. Every scientist knows that the free interchange of ideas and information is largely responsible for the rapid growth and general vigor of science. Technology has become increasingly dependent on basic science and has profited correspondingly. Furthermore, under the patent system direct technological information has been exchanged for many years with considerable freedom and with great advantage to everyone concerned.

WHAT about military technology? Merely as a technique it, too, would progress most rapidly if information were exchanged freely. We could doubtless make better weapons and planes if we had free access to all the ideas of everyone in the world who was thinking about weapons and planes. But so could our potential enemies. Consequently we must remind ourselves that the only reason for having a military technology is to defend ourselves or our friends against attack. Therefore our objective is not the best possible military technology but a constantly maintained advantage of our technology over that of our potential enemies. It is the difference between technologies that is important, not their absolute quality.

The atomic bomb is also an extreme example of the disappearance of the time gap between basic research and military technology. Nuclear fission was discovered in 1939 and incorporated in a weapon used in 1945. Compare this with the thirty-odd years that elapsed between the discovery of electromagnetic waves and their first use for communication. These changes put us in a difficult dilemma. On the one hand, rapid progress in basic science requires free interchange of information. Modern military technology depends on basic science. Therefore to achieve maximum military strength we must have free interchange of information. On the other hand, we want our military technology to surpass that of our enemies. We want to keep to ourselves our new weapon developments, on which we spend millions of dollars and the time of thousands of men. These developments may depend on discoveries in science. Therefore, we must have com-

(*Continued on page 27*)

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Ideas and Studies.

If ideas are weapons, as publishers proclaimed from the back of their book jackets during World War II, many of the new books should prove effective missiles in the fast thawing cold war. The American who would understand India, the vast sub-continent that holds a key to the Far Eastern enigma, can profitably turn to such books as "Gandhi's Letters to a Disciple," reviewed on page 10, and Jawaharlal Nehru's "Independence and After," commented upon last week. The sniping that occurs during undeclared wars is reflected in such books as Jerome Davis's "Character Assassination" (see page 9). If America is to be strong in any war, its own democracy must be in good order. Samuel Seabury's "The New Federalism" (below) and Charles P. Taft's "Democracy in Politics and Economics" (page 11) should help.

Folkways Instead of Stateways

THE NEW FEDERALISM. By Samuel Seabury. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 311 pp. $5.

By Morris L. Ernst

JUDGE SEABURY has written an exciting, simple, brave, but deliberative book. He is disturbed at the excess and concentration of social power in the "political state" and the lack of political action in the direction of eliminating all monopoly over natural resources and all private control of land. With great restraint he proposes steps better to preserve freedom of the individual by divorcing all power over industrial and social forces from the political state. His inexplicable silence on the writings of Brandeis does not deny the Brandeisian concepts, no more than his lack of reference to the great federalism debates of Philadelphia—May to September 1787—indicates any disagreement with the theory of home rule or the fact that the best of all law is the law created by "custom," that is "folkways" as distinguished from "stateways."

I was delighted with this volume particularly because Judge Seabury, more than any leading citizen of New York City, stood as a symbol of the extension of political power into the realm of even moral controls. Judge Seabury was the chief backer of that beloved mayor — La Guardia — who interpreted his political franchise of election day to mean the right to arrest women who played pinochle in the parks or the withdrawal of licenses from news dealers who purveyed magazines which the Little Flower deemed immoral. We now see a new Seabury. This volume may be unwitting penance for his using government as an instrument of moral rather than politico-economic controls.

On the assumption that there is no excuse for involuntary poverty and the doubtful theses that our "economic system has already broken down" and that the profit motive relies on a world of scarcity he nevertheless wisely agrees that people should no longer be taught to rely so deeply upon the political state. He appears as an evangelical supporter of the cooperative movement and persuasively points out that human unity lies in that direction because *all* people are consumers. The state—too big to do the job—should be decentralized and divested of its power over trade and industry, a step which requires a preliminary and provocative reconsideration of our concept of "sovereignty."

The political state must be dedicated to preventing all monopolies over all natural resources since man should only own as personal capital that which he creates. (This may interest the oil companies.) Henry George should come into his own and free trade is essential for peace on earth. (The real-estate lobby take note.) He attacks "special privilege" (cf. H. S. Truman); he draws lines between public and private property. (I suggest Winthrop Aldrich of the Chase Bank take note.) He urges the political government to end all monopoly. (This should really be read by the A&P). In brief, the political state should act as a shield instead of a spear and be relegated to the political field since legislation touching on industry has, he says, little application to industry, and when our representatives deal with moral issues they go astray, since who will not support virtue? The trend of all governments to be oppressive is well expressed. In

THE AUTHOR: There was no Dramamine for the "Seabury sickness" that felled some of the stockiest Tammanyites (including Gotham's Mayor James J. Walker) after Samuel Seabury began his investigation of corruption in New York in 1931. Judge Seabury, who has been credited by some with a million-dollar law practice and by others with but moderate income, declined $75,000 for delousing the Tiger, preferring "to give my services as a contribution . . . rendered in the effort to remedy gross injustices." Largely through his endeavors the Fusion Party, for which he continues to work, came into being, and with it reform Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. Seabury was but twenty-eight, with seven years' bar experience, when, as judge of the City Court in 1901, he exposed a jury-fixing system. Five years later he began an extended term as New York Supreme Court Justice, during which he became an Easthampton, L. I., squire with a taste for eighteenth-century poetry, first editions, and old masters. He would sit up until early A.M. perusing legal and social philosophy—perhaps recalling the hours he had spent as a youth discussing economics with Henry George or campaigning for Grover Cleveland. Born in the rectory of Manhattan's Church of the Annunciation, Seabury was educated by his clergyman father and is said to derive his forthrightness from the seed of the genealogically ubiquitous John and Priscilla Alden. Whether or no, in 1774 the Right Rev. Samuel Seabury, first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, published "some free thoughts on the proceedings of the Continental Congress . . . wherein their errors are exhibited, their reasonings confuted, and the fatal tendency of their nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption measures are laid open to the plainest understandings . . ." "The need of the modern world," warns his great, great grandson, "is that the different nations trade with one another. The economic monopolies which prevail can do no other than promote war." —R. G.

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fact, we have of necessity in all representative government a potential of only a small oligarchy because a majority of a majority runs the legislatures and hence we have minority rule. The government of industry and our social affairs should be returned more closely to the people to be treated with a far greater degree of voluntary law making, i.e., law in the sense of the mobile "common law."

He advocates that political and individual spheres of activity require different methods of representation and against this background he prefers a kind of less rigid development of a common law for control of our industrial life—to free our industrial relations from the abuses of "majority" voting power. Moreover, whereas in the political sphere a "territorial" representation is fitting, in the industrial and social areas of life "functional" representation is called for. Only by such divorce and reabsorption of power back to the people themselves can we stem the tide of statism already run to disaster under Stalin.

This volume then carries over the same theses into the international field—equal opportunity for all, world resources open to all, free trade, all of which will make cheerful reading for those who want a new approach to the relation of sovereignty to a world political government. Our great contribution—federalism—is an instrument of "territorial" unity to be copied in the international experiment of this century.

This volume should create a wide debate. Or maybe we must wait until this volume is documented, as I think it can be, by students in this field. Aside from a slight reference to the Berle facts on the concentration of the industrial wealth of our nation and a few passing references to the League of Nations and Point IV, this Seabury Inquiry is approached in philosophical terms. When the debate begins I may want to ask the Judge: who controls the cooperative members? (See Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, where each policyholder is a cooperator.) How shall we start to pinprick out the lines between political and industrial sectors of each man's daily interests? Can we get to voluntary industrial *controls* before we clean up the market place by destroying monopolies and private ownership of "public" resources? I trust we shall hear more from the Judge. He has no right to tease us with this first volume.

Morris L. Ernst, member of the New York law firm of Greenbaum, Wolff & Ernst, is author of "The Ultimate Power," among other books.

The Smearing of Public Men

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION. By Jerome Davis. New York: Philosophical Library. 259 *pp.* $3.

By Roger Baldwin

PROFESSOR DAVIS says he wrote this book because of a fundamental faith in freedom. More than to voice a faith, he was driven to it by the urgency of action to check the current cold-war witch-hunt. He winds up his introduction with a plea "to work here and now for freedom, justice, and a better life for all. There is not a moment to lose." Maybe not; crusaders never have a moment to lose.

To help achieve his millennial goal of a just and tolerant society, the professor is specifically concerned with stopping the smearing of public men (mostly the good ones he selects) and the intolerances of class and caste. His paste-pot-and-scissors material runs the gamut from the heresy-hunters of colonial Massachusetts through the political libelers of Presidents, switches to anti-Semitism and white supremacy as forms of character "assassination," and winds up with his major objective, an attack on every measure taken to spot Communists.

Since I go along in general with most of his condemnations of these measures, it is disheartening to find them compromised by partisan special pleading. Whatever value they might have is destroyed by total omission of any reference to character assassination by the masters of the art, the Communists. Nor is there any reference to assassination of conservatives or reactionaries; they are evidently fair game in a continuous open season. Thus Professor Davis's declaration of his faith in freedom becomes a partisan expression of the case for "our side."

Even as a case for the side of his angels, it is not a studious or useful compilation. Professor Davis is both a sociologist and an ordained minister. Evangelism has won over sociology. Balanced inquiry is wholly subordinated to selective evidence. If Professor Davis really thinks he is testifying to a fundamental faith in freedom it is not freedom for everybody but only for those good people who want a better world.

And among the good he makes no distinctions. Not a line in the book suggests that Communists are servants of police states, that Soviet Russia is a despotism, that Socialism isn't the same in England and Russia, or that the U. S. ever had a problem of Communist infiltration.

I do not thereby characterize Professor Davis as a fellow traveler. He belongs rather to that species of reformer who naively welcomes any and all promised lands in the place of the one we've got. No fine distinctions for him; police states or democracies are equally acceptable if they are headed for salvation.

Typical of his lack of discrimination necessary in the present conflict is this comment on Henry Wallace's 1948 crusade, which, of course, Davis supported:

> It is not easy to understand the theory on which radicals believe Socialism can be built by blackening the very countries which are trying it or by denouncing the candidate who most nearly favors a program of social reform.

When we recall that the candidate found nothing wrong with Russia and nothing right with the United States, it is evident that the professor accepts Russia and Communism as progressive forces. Yet the very anti-Communists he condemns are those whose agencies he commends and whose literature he cites as the best means for combating character assassination. His is the dilemma familiar among the captive Wallaceites, posing as the progressives they think they are and acting like the Party-line apologists others think they are. The book will appeal only in those circles where this faculty of facing two ways passes for liberalism.

Roger Baldwin is the former director of the American Civil Liberties Union.

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Communion of Modern Saints

GANDHI'S LETTERS TO A DISCIPLE. Introduction by John Haynes Holmes. New York: Harper & Bros. 234 pp. $2.50.

By Pierre van Paassen

HERE ARE some 351 of the letters written by Gandhi to that extraordinary woman, for a quarter century his faithful disciple and companion in the struggle for India's liberation, Madeleine Slade, the daughter of a British admiral, who gave up her social position in England, her wealth, home, friends, and all to follow in the steps of the Indian Master.

Although there is not the least attempt at metaphysical speculation or literary expression in these utterly simple documents — Gandhi was neither a theologian nor a poet— they nevertheless trace something of the outline of the Mahatma's own and of his beloved disciple's heroic march to the divine. Everything in his life, also the trivial and the menial, of which a good deal is mentioned in this volume, proceeded from a spiritual experience informed by the exigencies of moral action and tempered by the methodical rigors of an inner discipline. But he had also a great good humor. He could laugh like a child, and he never took himself too seriously.

A great deal can be learned from these letters about the inner workings of Gandhi's mind in the long nonviolent battle he waged for the truth. Here we still have the human being before the inevitable legends transform him into some blinding myth. The negative structure of the term nonviolence should not hide from us the eminently positive character of Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine and his work.

Not to hurt anyone does not merely mean abstaining from maltreating anyone and, more generally, all that lives and breathes. It means the use of spiritual weapons only, force of soul and not bodily strength in the struggle against evil and for justice and truth. This is essentially the Christian weapon of precision which will yet be universally accepted as men grow aware that the Nazarene was right when he said that the devil cannot be driven out by Beelzebub.

According to his own testimony, the reading of the Sermon on the Mount, accompanied by the Tolstoyan commentary, led Gandhi to explore the ancient themes of the Indian tradition of nonviolence, and to rethink them in terms of the political, social, and economic anguish in which his people lived. But to him alone goes the merit of having bound them together in a luminous and coherent synthesis and to have applied them to the reality with infinite and irresistible goodness.

This book will live when much that is fashionable in literature today is remembered no more. Dr. Holmes's prefatory essay is on a par in felicity of expression and depth of feeling with his great introduction to Renan's "Vie de Jésus." Gandhi, Tolstoy, Romain Rolland, Charles Freer Andrews, John Haynes Holmes, and Madeleine Slade, who all figure in this volume, are a wonderful company to be in—a communion of modern saints.

Pierre van Paassen, minister of a New York Unitarian Church, is the author of "Days of Our Years," "Earth Could Be Fair," and other books. Before becoming a clergyman Dr. Van Paassen served as a newspaper correspondent in Europe and the Near East.

Cosmos of Man

SCIENCE AND ENGLISH POETRY: A Historical Sketch, 1590-1950. By Douglas Bush. New York: Oxford University Press. 166 pp. $3.50.

By Donald A. Stauffer

PROFESSOR DOUGLAS BUSH has already written an illustrious line of books on classical mythology, on the English Renaissance and romantic and modern periods, and on their interconnections. As much as any scholar in America, he has cultivated the knack of generalizations and comparisons concerned with important literary subjects. His virtues are wide and deep knowledge, centrality, relevance, humor, and—though this may not be critically fashionable—sound sense.

This small volume, growing out of a series of lectures delivered in 1948-49 at Indiana University, is made to his hand. It is lightly and modestly written, yet the reader feels that the author might expand many a paragraph into a chapter or any of the chapters into a separate book. From the medieval heritage down to modern science and modern poetry the panorama is kept in proportion, quick and deft. All of the expected trees are there but the forest can always be seen as well as the hills beyond it and the sky above. The ruminant reader will find green pastures in every chapter. The particular illustrations, selected with tact, always illuminate.

The subtitle, "A Historical Sketch," might indicate that the book is purely descriptive but Mr. Bush has given it an argument. He acknowledges the services of science to truth and man, but his particular theme focuses upon "the liabilities and negations, apparent or real, that scientific progress has entailed." He frames science and poetry within philosophy and religion. In these clear pages great forces are juxtaposed: truth and virtue, fact and desire, order and freedom, the great cosmos and the little cosmos of man. The major figures—say, Donne or Newton or Tennyson—see beyond their home grounds, perhaps towards "the wholeness of individual experience in a mysterious world."

Anyone who wishes to be deeply aware of the intellectual foundations of Western civilization will add this small volume to his limited shelf of thoughtful books.

Donald A. Stauffer, chairman of the English Department at Princeton University, is the author of "The Nature of Poetry" and other books.

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Effective Wisdom

DEMOCRACY IN POLITICS AND ECONOMICS. By Charles P. Taft. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 69 pp. $2.

By T. V. Smith

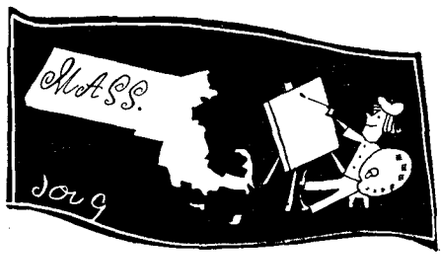
IF WE ARE not to indulge in the ignoble sport of "criticism without a fulcrum" we must disclose our point of view, indeed two points of view.

If, for instance, in the spirit of this book rather than of its title, we place ourselves in the pew, letting Charles Taft occupy the pulpit, we will hear a sermon nobler than most sermons and not of looser logic. The Taft who now speaks is the personal Christian and the public lay representative of Protestant Christianity, even a former and late president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. His plaint is of a humanity divided against itself and of a virtue come largely to nought because of competition between its parts. The theme is that if men knew more they would do better, that if they could find a proper cause they would pull together, and that if their hearts were right their knowledge and their enterprise would both be more fruitful. From the vantage of such unction most important intellectual questions are begged, but are begged because it is assumed that pure religion and undefiled should and could redeem the world.

If, however, we leave the pew, shake hands with the preacher complimentarily, go out into the street and next day to our business as usual, we shall, as usual, find different preoccupations. We may even meet at Monday luncheon the other Charles Taft: the politician, the public-spirited servant, the labor conciliator, the large-minded man of the world going about his business, with neither of us remembering the day before the morning after or getting much aid from the view of life which the pulpit disclosed. The major plaint of this book is indeed that the pew-pulpit vantage does not yield much advantage for anybody in the world of affairs.

The three lectures which make up this small volume were indeed delivered at a secular university, the Rice Institute at Houston, and they take seriously to task the effectiveness of the church in daily life. They trace the origins of democracy, emphasizing the role of Christianity therein, leaning heavily on Lord Lindsay's (excessive) emphasis upon the part played in the evolution of Anglo-American democracy by the dissenting churches and especially playing up Cromwell's accommodation to the Levellers. With little claimed or contributed that is original, we nevertheless find subsequent to the historical sketch much that is enlightening and not a little that is diverting in the personal experiences of an honest and intelligent man intent upon doing good. We are made vividly aware of the remoteness of religious men from the problems of human organization and administration. We hear Mr. Taft's painful narrative of how he had to learn by trial and error what the actual incentives of men are. We hear complaint against American education because it is not more deeply religious (among other defects) and equal complaint against the innocence and ineffectiveness of those who are religiously educated. We watch Mr. Taft slowly achieve moral knowledge from secular-scientific studies (as from Elton Mayo and Mary Follett), a fine achievement which he seems to regret was not bequeathed him from youth through his devotion to religion. "My education in religion and philosophy," he complains, "gave me little preparation to deal with that. I've had to dig it out myself the hard way."

Well, who didn't and doesn't? It is this naivete which alone we would remark adversely. There is much in the volume to praise. Its nonhistorical content is fresh and personal. Its spirit is uplifted and yet practical. Its specific injunctions are filled with common sense and sweet reasonableness. But Mr. Taft seems not to see what he continuously demonstrates: that religion (he speaks as though it were exhausted by Christianity) is defined by and indeed constituted from the problems of life, rather than being a magic formula given for the solution of those problems. He seems to expect to be saved by what he is all the while having himself to save as he goes along. He sees, but does not seem to see, the significance of the fact that not all good men ever agree upon goodness, that not all just men ever agree on justice, that not all holy men ever agree on holiness. Successful living, either personal or corporate, consists in applying wit and will to that radical and discrepant reality. It is each man's privilege to call effective wisdom whatever he will. And there is no law against calling it religion. But whatever we call it, it is something got, not given. And it is logically absent-minded to substitute a name for what is named, to confuse a reason with a cause. To make this mistake is to originate a plaint so precious that it can never be placated. Mr. Taft indeed enables us to define preaching as the self-creation of what is castigated, an enterprise as endless as it is artful.



Ideas & Studies Notes

THE GOOD LIFE, by E. Jordan. University of Chicago Press. $5. The name of E. Jordan, wholly unknown to even the most voracious of general readers, is rapidly becoming something to conjure with in philosophical circles. For many years a professor of philosophy at Butler University in Indianapolis and now retired from that position, Mr. Jordan here gives us the fourth in a series of profound and original philosophic works, the first three being "Forms of Individuality," "Theory of Legislation," and "The Aesthetic Object." Other philosophers are beginning to discuss these works in the learned journals and doctoral candidates are writing dissertations on them. In the present book Jordan is wrestling with the nature of the good in an effort to construct a system of ethical theory. Discarding all traditional systems, whether naturalistic or idealistic, whether psychological or sociological in emphasis, he decides that terms like "good" and "bad" are not adjectives at all, but adverbs. The good lies not in the person, not in intentions or motives, not in emotions or feelings, not in states of mind, and not in the consequence of action, but in action itself. Action is the basic objective fact upon which all morality depends. The analysis of action bridges the gap between fact and value and between nature and culture. The thesis thus spills over into other disciplines and has an especial relevance for metaphysics, sociology, and political philosophy. Although the argument proceeds on an abstruse and difficult level, it is also coherent and systematic, rich in insights, and comprehensive in scope. It is a book to study rather than to read. It will almost certainly have an honorable and enduring place in the ethical theory of this century.

PATTERNS OF PROGRESS, by Horace M. Kallen. Columbia University Press. $1.75. Cloaking a relatively simple argument in a distressingly involved and jargon-laden style, Dr. Kallen tries to pull down to philosophic fundamentals the idea and ideal of Progress. The story of mankind in its search for Happiness, he says, reveals the story of progress; but the forces that make for progress

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in daily life depend upon the individual free man. Likewise, the awareness of progress is personal, not collective, and it is an awareness "of struggle, of barriers passed, of resistance overcome, and a way opened." Progress, he reiterates, is not an achievement of fixed ends; its presence is felt in improved and changing means. "The going," he says over and over, "is the goal." Having thus put forward Progress as a philosophy for "Thisworld," Dr. Kallen tackles the problem of death, when for the individual "Thisworld" is no more and "the going" is stopped. He disdains "poets, priests, and philosophers" who preach "dogmas of immortality" that are "compensations in idea for [death's] occurrence in fact"; to the genuinely free, "the living of life is enough."

The road to such a philosophy is alive with obstacles planted by philosophers of contrary faiths, and in the course of explaining his own Dr. Kallen hurls demolition bombs at a numerous and diverse opposition—with some palpable hits and several near-misses. Among others, he attacks all creeds promising Salvation in the next world, the Marxist dialectic, Gandhi's civil disobedience, Schopenhauer's pessimism, and the existentialism of Sartre and Heidegger. About the only faith to receive a clean bill of philosophic health is the pragmatism of William James, of whom the author is a high-ranking latter-day disciple. —PETER R. LEVIN.

ANIMAL I Q, by Vance Packard. Dial Press. $2.50. Did you know that bees can tell time, that possums don't "play possum" but faint, that mice can solve a maze better than subway-trained college students? "Animal I Q" gives all the answers in a fascinating book of experiments in animal psychology. Written with fine humor and wonderfully illustrated, the book will bring bitter disillusionment to many animal lovers. For man's best friends, the dog, the cat, and the horse, are shown to be excelled in intelligence by many animals of dubious intellectual reputation, e.g., elephant, ass, raccoon.

Cats and dogs rate high in instinct but low in reasoning power. The cat is indifferent, selfish, and a golddigger. The dog tries pathetically hard to please but, except for certain breeds, is slow in learning and reasons practically not at all. A horse makes a miserable showing on intelligence tests that any self-respecting pig can pass with ease.

The chimpanzee, it turns out, is the most intelligent of all animals. In tests it frequently out-reasons typical five-year-old American youngsters. —DONALD B. THORBURN.

Fiction.

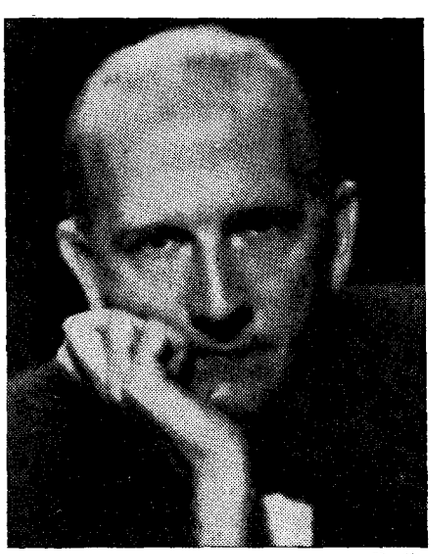
The three novels reviewed this week might have come from different worlds. Anna Seghers's "The Dead Stay Young" reveals the evil forces that placed Germany in the hands of the Nazis after 1918 in a grim story of five men who kill a young Communist soldier. In "Shadow on the Hearth" Judith Merril gives a new slant to the recurrent atomic-war nightmare of innumerable Americans. The story is told by an ordinary housewife and mother living in a suburb too near New York. Humor is represented by "Maiden Voyage," whose author claims the improbable name of Barnaby Dogbolt. It is about an innocent professor's not so innocent gambols in England. There are two volumes of stories: Martha Foley's annual collection, "The Best American Short Stories, 1950," illustrating the expert manner with which our younger writers accept despair and defeat, and A. A. Milne's latest light, humorous tales.

Milne Characters, Incidents & Charm

A TABLE NEAR THE BAND. By A. A. Milne. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 249 pp. $3.

By HOLLIS ALPERT

MR. MILNE'S new volume contains thirteen short stories. They are, most of them, quite pleasant examples of the way in which a mature, accomplished writer can take an incident or two, add a small cast of characters, work out a few complications, select a charming and deft method of telling, season with just the proper touch of irony, and then whip it all up into a nice froth that will go down with ease — and practically no aftereffects at all. A. A. Milne is most successful at it, and only two in the group succeeded in giving me any annoyance. These, to get them out of the way in a hurry, involved (on the one hand) a coy re-creation of Noah's family just before the flood and (on the other) some post-death adventures of Albert Edward Wilberforce Pryke while awaiting an audience with Saint Peter.



—*Harlip.*

A. A. Milne—"very definitely a certain sort of person."

It is the "light touch," the manner, which saves the others; polished little performances, all of them. The humor is perhaps a bit on the "British" side (with all that that implies), and the characters remind one a little too much of people one has met before in polite British comedies, but I found them quite relaxing during an afternoon I spent at the beach. First the dash into the cold waves, then the rub-down with a towel, and, after adjusting sun glasses, clearing away some empty beer bottles left by previous occupants of the sand space, the opening of the book. "I was giving Marcia lunch at the Turandot" — one of them began. And you learn what Marcia is like. Rather on the bitchy side, we might call her here, but Mr. Milne understands her, finds her charming (seems to hope we will, too), and implies gently that, after all, she might not be *exactly* the right girl for an eligible bachelor to marry. And, to be sure, and luckily, the benighted young men are saved in time.

Next, an exercise in sentiment, "The Prettiest Girl in the Room." A woman of fifty meets again the man who first called her that some thirty years before. What happens? A bit of nostalgia, some memories, and the realization that "all the turbulent uneasiness and pathetic silliness of youth was behind you." But the fillip remains yet to come. Charles, her husband, on the ride home from the cocktail party says to her . . . Yes, exactly.

Now we find a fifteen-year-old girl

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telling a story, about an elderly man who has moved to town. Everyone thinks him to be a famous Scotland Yard man, one who has brought many murderers to justice. In fact, it is the girl herself who has spread the news. But when he dies and when her father, the vicar, must deliver the eulogy what do we find? That Mr. Anderson, now greatly beloved, had strangled his wife and spent many of his years behind bars.

(I adjust my position on the sand, a small boy groping blindly behind a huge frozen custard cone steps on my toe, and I go on.) The next one is a treat indeed. It's called "The Rise and Fall of Mortimer Scrivens," and I think it's first-rate English "county" humor. A nice couple has borrowed some books from a snappish man in a neighboring village. There is an exchange of letters: one of the books now has a beer ring on its cover, and Brian Haverhill discovers something about the first-edition market as he advertises for a copy to replace the one with the beer ring. I began to chuckle, and my friend Gertrude (who had spread sun oil on her back and was absorbing rays nearby) asked, "What's the matter with *you*?"

"It's this story," I said. "It's funny."

"What's it about?"

"Well, it's about a book called 'Country Tilth'. . ."

"Country *what*?"

"*Tilth*. . . ."

"Oh," Gertrude said, and spread more sun oil on her shoulder.

I guess it's all in the way they're written. And, now that I think about it, it seems to me that people have been saying that about Mr. Milne for a long time. In fact, I might very well sum up by quoting from Mr. John Mason Brown on the subject: "Very definitely a certain sort of person. He is sensitive. He can write charmingly. He can be witty in the fluffiest tradition of English Wit, and his prose is at once facile and precise."

Amen.

Defeatism & Hints of Profundity

THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES, 1950. Edited by Martha Foley. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 452 pp. $3.75.

By Edward J. Fitzgerald

MISS FOLEY'S annual collection of "Best American Short Stories" is again with us. Reading it one is forced to conclude that the American short story is once again in a bad way. For the collection is a dull one, a charge frequently made in the past which must be made more sharply this time.

The criticism can be qualified because there is here also a high proportion of finished writing. This is surprising in that most of the writers are relatively new. The trouble is they don't sound new. They sound old, old both in technical experience and in the tired defeatism with which they view the world.

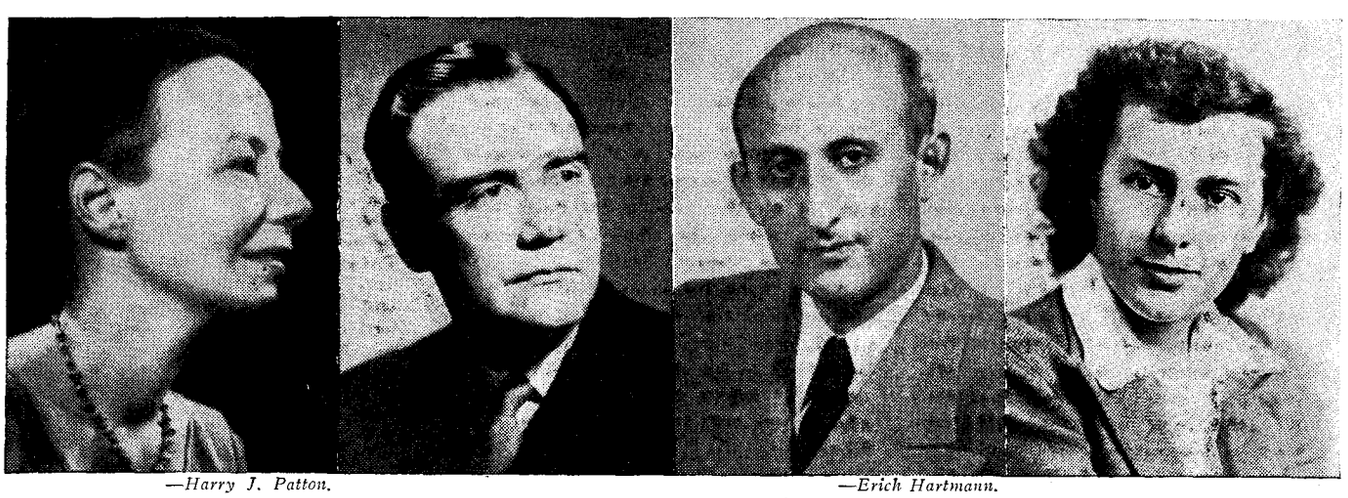
They also sound alike. It is not that the stories sound as if they were written by the same person. It is more as if all had learned from the same teacher. This being so, one might hope that these were not the best American short stories, but the best stories of a type which appeals to Miss Foley. I do not believe this is so. I feel Miss Foley has chosen wisely. Though one might quarrel with specific inclusions or individual selections from the works of particular authors, the collection as a whole stands as representative of the best being published today.

What are the characteristics of these stories? The first—noted in Miss Foley's introduction — is the extraordinary proportion about children. Of the twenty-eight stories eight deal principally with children. Almost all of these are effective and the best stories in the book are among them; yet to my mind only one is of consequence. In "The Glass Wall" Victoria Lincoln again presents a searchingly perceptive tale of a girl on the edge of maturity. The story's distinction lies in the fact that the situation which confronts Miss Lincoln's heroine is one which she will have to meet again and again as she continues growing. The destructive effects of prejudice upon the mind and spirit of the prejudiced are a persistent problem for the sensitive individual in our society. We know how Miss Lincoln's Celia met the problem and how as a maturer person can and will meet it.

The other children's stories deal with the more usual childhood discoveries of misunderstanding, cruelty, and evil in the adult world. Deborah in Ralph Gustafson's "The Pigeon" is shocked into permanent alienation from her father by his insensitivity. Speed Lamkin's Pete in "Comes a Day" garners only bitterness from his discovery that parents, too, are guilty of sins of omission and commission. In Peggy Bennett's "Death Under the Hawthornes" Junior discovers loneliness and the cruelty of his fellows. And in Joan Strong's "The Hired Man" ten-year-old Sandra confronts the forces of destruction within herself.

All of these are expertly written and moving in their allusive implications of the scars these childhood situations will leave. Yet they remain curiously incomplete, like fragments of longer tales. The implication in all of them is that the spirit of the child has been permanently warped. But what happened after? And don't some scars heal? The formula—and it has become a formula—does not permit answers, certainly no positive ones.

The allusiveness of the writing in these children's stories, the hint of tragic developments not to be told, is the second and more important characteristic of almost all the stories in this book and contributes to the



—*Harry J. Patton.* —*Erich Hartmann.*

Victoria Lincoln, Warren Beck, Edward Newhouse, Peggy Bennett—"allusiveness . . . elevated to a method of not writing."

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feeling of monotony and defeat in the collection as a whole. By the use of symbols author after author hints at broader implications, deeper meanings than he has explicated. This is a good device and its reappearance in American fiction of recent years, coinciding with our rediscovery of Hawthorne, Melville, and James, has been a welcome development. But the implications must really be broader, the meanings deeper than the things said, and the author must know what he is leaving unsaid so well that he is able to convey it to the reader precisely. Unfortunately, in many of the stories here presented one is left rather with the impression that the author has hinted at things unsaid more because he didn't know how to say them than because he had found the most effective way of saying them. The allusiveness that could be one tool of the writer has been elevated to a method of not writing.

The stories "Edge of Doom," by Warren Beck; "The Fear of Innocence," by Leslie Fiedler, and, surprisingly, "Children in an Old House," by the usually expert Josephine Johnson, were, to my mind, particularly marred by this defect. By contrast Esther McCoy, in her story "The Cape," quite clearly defines for the reader the tragic despair of a woman losing her breast to cancer, both as to the feelings the woman permits herself and the psychological implications she is only vaguely aware of.

Clay Putnam's "The Old Acrobat and the Ruined City" and Peter Taylor's "A Wife of Nashville" are other stories in which the material presented can stand by itself but gains by the carefully evoked overtones. Neither of these stories, however, is, in my opinion, the best that Mr. Putnam and Mr. Taylor produced in the year 1949.

Of the remaining stories in the volume I would commend James Aswell's "Shadow of Evil" and Edward Newhouse's "My Brother's Second Funeral" as workmanlike stories in a more conventional mold.

Most of the stories are not only by younger writers but they have appeared in the university and regional reviews and in the "little" magazines. This last means that they are not the stories which Americans in any large number are reading. However, it is probable that many more Americans will be reading future stories by many of these writers, partly because they have received Miss Foley's accolade. More important still, younger writers will be reading them. Happily, they can learn much from them in craftsmanship. It is to be hoped that they don't take over also the defeatism, failure of completion, and feeling of lethargy which pervade the collection.

The Two Worlds of Germany

THE DEAD STAY YOUNG. By Anna Seghers. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 478 pp. $4.

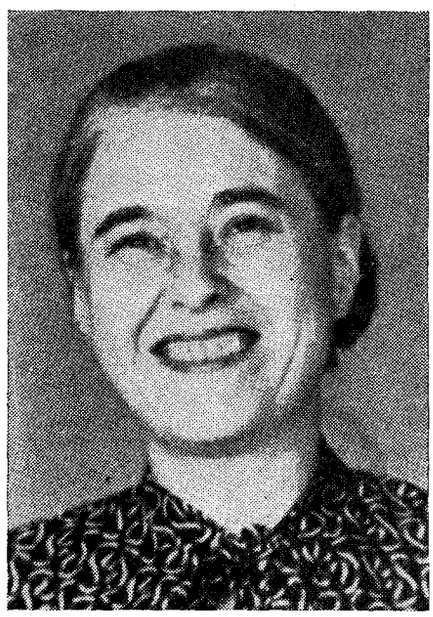
By Robert Pick

THE BASIC blueprint of this novel is a simple one. It opens with the secret liquidation of a young fighter in the Berlin revolt of 1918 and proceeds to tell the life stories of the five men who have taken it upon themselves to mete out justice. These men —Von Klemm, scion of a wealthy Ruhr family and officer in the reserve; Becker, his orderly, chauffeur, and confidant; Wenzlow, Von Klemm's brother-in-law, a career officer of old Prussian stock; Von Lieven, a Baltic expellee, and the sergeant, Nadler, who is a farmer in civilian life—stand for the forces that dragged Germany down the road of lawlessness to the collapse of 1945. The time covered by Anna Seghers's many-sided story is 1918 to 1945.

The wealth of events in these twenty-seven fateful years of German and European politics and their complexities force her to compress the historical background material to the utmost. In many instances important historical episodes—important also for her story—are barely hinted at in a conversational aside. Readers not equipped with the best of memories, or too young to recall that period, will more often than not be at a loss to grasp the political motives for the actions of her protagonists and take what these characters do, or fail to do, only for the effect of inborn villainy or weakness. Yet, put against the full background of history, the life of even so depraved a cynic as the well-born soldier of fortune and lady-killer Von Lieven is not without pathetic overtones; his marriage of convenience to a beautiful cousin whose frivolity does not undo the streak of romanticism in her represents in a nutshell the tragic loss of values that destroyed their caste.

Anna Seghers succeeds in keeping such allegorical turns from encroaching on her story. Nor does she *a priori* condemn those who in its course earn their eternal damnation themselves. But for all that, she is far more convincing when she deals with people close to her heart.

While being the story of five killers, her novel is also the story of how the killed man lives on. Before being carted off to his death he has spent a couple of nights with a working girl who knows next to nothing about him. When he fails to come again, and Marie cannot find his friend, Martin,



Anna Seghers—a conflict reduced "almost entirely to the Communist vs. Fascist issue."

she yet does not give up hope or loyalty. To give a home to his child she marries a middle-aged widower, a worker, and raises his three children together with her own. Marie is a superb and thoroughly lovable figure. But she is, to my mind, also the only one to show the mastership of the author of "The Seventh Cross."

Chance leads Marie's boy to Martin and, while they both ignore their true connection, the dead man—Martin's friend and the youngster's father —through Martin talks, as it were, to his son and passes on his beliefs to him. Later, as the member of a Communist cell in the army, the boy falls into the hands of Major Wenzlow. And here, at the very end of the novel, the two worlds into which Anna Seghers sees her Germany split finally confront each other:

> Now at last it occurred to [Wenzlow] where he had once seen that fellow with his impudent face and the yellow crop of hair they were taking off to be shot. . . . As they [then] drove through the Grunewald and the prisoner sat in front of them, he had thought in passing: "Why, he looks like me! And he is just my age." Right after that they had got out of the car. . . .
>
> They had [then] put the man in the ground and covered him up. But how young he had stayed!. . . Death seemed not to have touched him. They had ridden roughshod over him, Noske and Lichtschlag, Kapp and Luettwitz. But how young he had stayed! The Nazis had promised him heaven on earth, but he had not let himself be fooled. They had crushed him in every mill. . . . They had led him to war, from battle to battle. But he had not let himself be killed: he had stayed young. Even

(*Continued on page* 24)

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Personal History.

No matter what your warm-weather reading tastes, you are likely to find something to appeal to them among the new biographical works reviewed below. If you seek escape and nostalgia with feminine undertones, you will probably like Roberta McConnell's fast and hilarious account of life in the canyons of the West, "Never Marry a Ranger," or Louisa W. Peat's idyl of a Northern Ireland estate at the turn of the century, "Grandma Did It This Way." If doctors' trials and triumphs fascinate you, you will want to read Elizabeth H. Thomson's new biography of Harvey Cushing (or, for that matter, Ernest Earnest's life of S. Weir Mitchell, reviewed last week). If your tastes are political, you will enjoy Erick Estorick's biographical approach to the evolving British Commonwealth in "Changing Empire."

Builders of the British Commonwealth

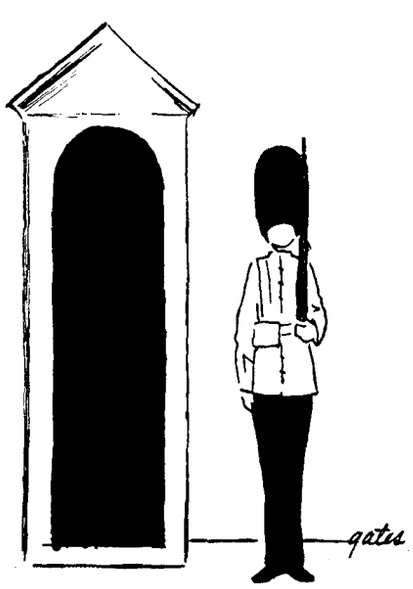
CHANGING EMPIRE: Churchill to Nehru. By Erick Estorick. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 342 *pp.* $3.75.

By William H. Stevenson

HERE ARE portraits in miniature of seven builders of the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is not clear why Mr. Estorick gives pride of place to Winston Churchill. For except in his early Liberal phase, when he loyally backed Campbell-Bannerman in conferring self-government on the defeated Boers, Churchill has always displayed the crassness which is summed up in the moth-eaten motto of some of the British aristocracy—"what we have we hold." Witness his attitude towards India. In 1935, as Mr. Estorick recalls, he declared that "we [the British] are there forever." He violently attacked the Labor Government in 1947 for withdrawing British troops and rule from India, commenting in Pecksniffian vein, "It is with deep grief that I have watched the clattering down of the British Empire with all its glories. . . ." Mr. Estorick perfectly limns the imperial aspect of Churchill's career when he describes him as a fighter for the yesterdays.

Clement Attlee appears in a different light, not as a dashing cavalry leader, but as a patient, constructive, imaginative builder. In many respects he recalls Campbell-Bannerman. He knows how to reconcile fissiparous elements in his party; he inspires confidence by his very lack of showmanship; he is liberal to the core. Many of his fellow countrymen, and more than a few persons overseas, seriously underrate the British Prime Minister. They—Mr. Estorick is not among them—mistake his quiet, efficient modesty for mediocrity, his matter-of-fact speeches for dulness. Actually, when he lets himself go in private he is as lively a wisecracker as one could meet. Attlee came to No. 10 Downing Street armed with a vast knowledge of India and its problems. Not only had he served on the Simon Commission, which surveyed India, but he wrote a substantial part of the report. Thenceforward he gave unremitting study to the complex issues involved. When the negotiations of 1947 came to pass he played, in Mr. Estorick's phrase, the greatest political gambit of all time. India was free.

Jawaharlal Nehru for India, with his colleagues, responded in what may well rank, politically, as one of the great spiritual gestures of all time. Here was a man who had suffered on different occasions a total of nine years' imprisonment at the hands of British imperialists. He knew, none better, how much the misrule of the overlords had added to the inescapable miseries of the teeming millions whose chief spokesman he was. But he suppressed all rancor and elected that India should remain within the Commonwealth of Nations as a free republic. His subsequent handling of the grave internal problems of India, particularly the relations with Pakistan, stamp him one of the truly great statesmen of the world.



Opinions differ about Nehru's veto of the Australian suggestions at the conference held in Ceylon at the beginning of this year, backed by Ernest Bevin, for a Pacific pact to resist subversive movements and for effective mutual economic assistance. This rebuff to the British foreign secretary and the subsequent setback when the Egyptian Government declined to permit the passage of oil tankers through the Suez Canal are narrated by Mr. Estorick with a slight degree of relish. He is not alone among American writers in a disesteem of Bevin that is puzzling to almost all Britons. True, he lacks the suavity and verbal dexterity of the traditional British diplomat but in the long line of foreign secretaries he comes nearest to understanding of the common man. Nor did he take over his high office as a mere tyro. As general secretary of the powerful Transport and General Workers' Union he had attended innumerable international conferences, and for years he commissioned private investigators to send him reports of on-the-spot inquiries in many countries of the world.

It is fitting that Mr. Estorick gives due prominence to Canada as the first nation to achieve independence under the British Crown. To mention this is to bring to mind, instantly, the name of Mackenzie King, that outstanding statesman, who, like Attlee, was launched in politics from a social settlement—not Limehouse, but Hull House, Chicago. With equal justice, one of this excellent series of pemmican biographies (somewhat marred by repetitiveness), is devoted to Herbert Vere Evatt, of Australia, whose firm belief it is that "the objectives of the British Commonwealth and those of the United Nations are in complete harmony, so that a stronger British Commonwealth means a stronger United Nations and a surer guarantee of peace." Of special value is the study of Jan Smuts and his superb work in South Africa as a conciliator of his people with the British. Ever since the end of the infamous Boer War, at the turn of the century, he, like Nehru, has displayed immense magnanimity. Currently this chapter is of significance for it is from South Africa that the next big headache of the Commonwealth is coming.

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A Judge on Himself

A SEGMENT OF MY TIMES. By Joseph M. Proskauer. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 270 pp. $3.

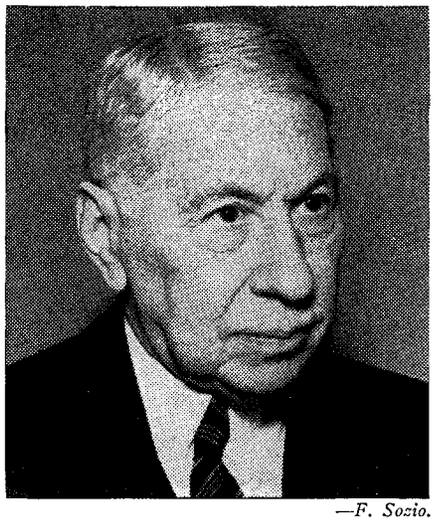
By Alvin Johnson

JUDGE PROSKAUER is one of the really significant men of the generation now closing its books. Born in Mobile in 1877, he drew in with his mother's milk two great traditions, the tradition of the distinguished Jewish emigré from a reactionary Germany, and the gentle and humane tradition of the Old South; not then or even yet extinguished in the sweet, old city of Mobile. His moral stratum was that of Carl Schurz, liberal in the grand tradition of the ancient Stoics and uncorrupted Epicureans, of Hume and Turgot and Jefferson, individualistic, humane, valuing liberty above prosperity and power, happiness and life itself. As a youth Judge Proskauer was oriented toward this imperishable liberalism and, as one finds in most biographies, the man is remarkably consistent with the boy.

Like many another talented young Southerner, Judge Proskauer made his way to New York, to study at Columbia, where his quicksilver instinct found infallibly the pure gold of Professor Woodberry and the brilliant students drawn to Professor Woodberry, who became his lifelong friends.

Of course, he went in for the law. To the traditional liberal the law is the undying spirit of social life, spirit too often smothered in base material, yet shining through. Young Proskauer took the law seriously and, as was inevitable, rose. And, as was also inevitable for a man of Southern birth, he admitted no differentiation between law and politics. He was soon active in the movement for reformed city government, attached himself to Theodore Roosevelt (though a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat), came in contact with Al Smith, whom he grew to love as Jonathan loved David and whom he still loves beyond the grave.

Proskauer was not a seeker after political office but ardently cherished the post behind the throne. He was one of Al Smith's cherished advisers. He was too much committed to Al Smith to seek a corresponding position with Roosevelt, whose technique of life hardly admitted of significant outside influence. But Proskauer could apply his talents to the complicated realm of Jewish affairs, struggling to maintain the liberal position of the Jew as an American of the Americans, loyal to his religion and his traditional ways as is the right of every American, as against the extreme Zionist doctrine of the Jew as a stranger within the American gates.



—*F. Sozio.*

Joseph M. Proskauer—"two traditions."

For a time Proskauer served on the bench and won a reputation as one of the most just and intelligent judges in America. Most liberals were confident that he would rise steadily, finally to take his place in the Supreme Court. But he felt himself stifled in the judicial robe and retired to resume his place at the bar, an eminent place, to be sure, but it is hard to find in his record as a lawyer compensation for the loss of a powerfully intelligent judge. Still we may be grateful that his experience as judge produced one of the ablest criticisms we have of the conventional treatment of the criminal and of the American jury fetish.

A friend of Judge Proskauer, who read the manuscript of this book, suggested that the Proskauer had been done satisfactorily but that there is not enough of the Joe his friends love. As a concession to this feeling, Judge Proskauer adds an epilogue in which he asserts his love for mountain and stream, the opening spring and the song of the birds, the cathedral of Chartres, Rembrandt and Hals, Bach and Beethoven and even Tchaikovsky. Alas, even these adornments do not create the Joe, whom the reviewer knows only by hearsay.

In a long and varied life there must have been many moments of indecision, of doubts as to the right position to take on vital issues. The account the Judge gives us is one of infallible adherence to the right side. One is sometimes forced to exclaim with Oliver Cromwell: "In the bowels of Christ, man, is it impossible for you to conceive that you may sometimes be mistaken?"

Alvin Johnson, formerly director of the New School for Social Research, New York City, has written "Deliver Us from Dogma" and other books.

Victor Over Death

HARVEY CUSHING: Surgeon, Author, Artist. By Elizabeth H. Thomson. New York: Henry Schuman. 346 pp. $4.

By Martin Gumpert

THIS IS the second comprehensive biography of Harvey Cushing to appear within ten years of his death, showing his eminent stature in American medicine. After the excellent earlier book by his friend John F. Fulton, Elizabeth H. Thomson, a research assistant at the Historical Library of the Yale University School of Medicine, interprets Cushing's singularly transparent and rewarding life, a life inspired by controlled passion and intuitive genius, and by iron demands on himself and his co-workers. He followed unfailingly his self-appointed task: to deprive death of one of its most vicious and hitherto invincible weapons, and he succeeded through the combined effort of daring and knowledge.

This book in no way dramatizes or idealizes Cushing's life; it gives an almost sober account of his ventures and accomplishments and does not even overlook his fiery ambition to excel or the occasional conflicts caused by his uncompromising temper and zeal. He attained the highest possible level in the art of healing through an ideal combination of enthusiasm and skepticism, of deep-rooted devotion to medical tradition and history together with bold and fearless penetration into the unknown, of wisdom and conscience and almost unbelievable skill.

When Cushing decided that neurosurgery or, more specifically, the surgery of brain tumors, was to be his field, few attempts had been made to help the victims of this hopeless affliction, and those few had been, for the most part, heartbreaking. The first operations for the removal of tumors from the brain had been ventured upon in the Nineties but a series of failures had plunged all leading surgeons into deep pessimism. Brain tumors were considered inoperable.

Harvey Cushing was thirty years old when, after an apprenticeship under Kocher in Berne, he returned in 1901 to Johns Hopkins University, where—after some struggle—he was able to organize the first neuro-surgical department in this country. Thirty years later, on August 15, 1931, he was writing the report of his two thousandth brain operation. For thirty years he had done nothing but operate on tumors of the brain. He had devoted his life, the lives of his assist-

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ants and nurses, the arrangements of his hospitals, the hours of every day, the mechanics of every movement, to the service of this one single thing—operating on brain tumors. Diagnosis and techniques had steadily improved.

Most important of all, however, was the unique technical organization which aided Cushing's scalpel in its work. The result was that the fatalities from the four worst kinds of brain tumors, which in his practice from 1901 to 1912 still amounted to 30.9, 13.5, 21, and 25 per cent, in the years between 1928 and 1931 had been reduced to 11, 5.7, 7.7, and 4.4 per cent. That is an overwhelming victory over death.

The harvest of his surgical experience and observation was twelve books and 330 papers. Cushing was one of the first to recognize the primary importance of the pituitary gland, that "master gland" which just now in the course of new discoveries and, by the application of the adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), is revolutionizing medical thinking. His first description and definition of rare neurological disorders will perpetuate his name in medicine.

But beyond the insight into the main achievements of his scientific work, this book gives a moving picture of his fascinating personality, of his shy tenderness, his warm and compassionate human interest in each of his cases, his capacity for friendship and love, his participation in social and artistic endeavors, that broadened and deepened with age. The good spirits of his growth—Vesalius, the great anatomist of the Renaissance (whose works he assembled into the finest and most complete collection in existence), and William Osler, his fatherly friend—are honored by outstanding biographies from his hand. His famous library has been left to Yale University, where he studied and where he died teaching and planning to the last hour of his rich and generous life.

Cushing had experienced his share of death and battle and disease, but in today's depressing confusion his life, which ended only a few years ago, in 1939, reads almost like a saga out of a better age. It was a life of pride, nobility, integrity, and it was also—in spite of its tremendous responsibilities—carefree and happy. Elizabeth Thomson's story of that life is one of the most inspiring books I have read in recent years.

Martin Gumpert, a New York physician, is author of "Dunant, The Story of the Red Cross," "You Are Younger Than You Think," "Trailblazers of Science," and other books.

—From "Never Marry a Ranger."

A Wild Calling

NEVER MARRY A RANGER. By Roberta McConnell. New York: Prentice-Hall. 261 pp. $2.75.

By Pamela Taylor

FOR ANYONE faced with spending a summer in a large city, "Never Marry a Ranger" might be taken as a kind of dual-action antidote. Read as "escape literature," pure and simple, it abounds in the wide-sweeping vistas of mountain ranges, with all the descriptions of canyon colors changing as the welcome rains fall on them and wild animals stealing in from the forest that the city-bound nature lover could wish. But it must also be admitted that Mrs. McConnell's account of the summer spent with her two small children and her husband, the ranger, at a forest station in the mountains of Utah makes metropolitan life seem peaceful, untroubled, and downright Arcadian.

From beginning to end this is a breathless chronicle. The McConnells plunged right up to their necks in their season of assorted emergencies on arrival at their new station. Ordered to it too late to make inquiries, they had cheerfully piled all their belongings into a moving van and followed in their old car. A series of flat tires brought them to their beautiful new domain two hours after the van, only to find that the station consisted of one room and a lean-to. What to do with all the furniture, including the piano, was just the first problem of a life which resembled nothing so much as a six-ring circus operating twenty-four hours a day.

Following each other in almost nightmare kaleidoscope were marauding wildlife, horses with a penchant for falling into abandoned garbage pits, orders from headquarters countermanded as soon as acted upon, radios which cut off at crucial moments, stoves which went up in smoke, plumbing which balked, picnickers whose cars were boiling over, cattle wishing to pasture on forbidden picnicking grounds, fishermen, forest fires, and rains which fell in torrents through leaky tents. For the children it was wonderful. Brought up to be independent, they were out of sight most of the time promoting their own schemes, and they were never sick. But for their mother, naturally gregarious and cozy, the isolated station became almost unbearable.

However you may picture a ranger's life (just in case you have ever given any mental time to the subject) the odds are ten to one that you have never even vaguely approached the reality as Mrs. McConnell paints it. Mrs. McConnell doesn't, quite obviously, mean the advice which she gives in her title, but her book might quite well be read as a blueprint for the ideal ranger's wife. To have survived what she did and come up full of bounce seems miraculous. "Never Marry a Ranger" is about as restful as riding twice around the Steeplechase at Coney Island double speed without stopping, but it is nevertheless hilarious entertainment from start to finish.

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Eden in Erin

GRANDMA DID IT THIS WAY. By Louisa W. Peat. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 247 pp. $2.75.

By Ann F. Wolfe

IN THIS our anxious and feral day one of the more innocent forms of solace is escape into the happy past. For all but the sternest and strongest there are ostrich moments when the troubled head seeks respite in the sands of nostalgia.

A salute then to an Atomic-Age publisher for these turn-of-the-century reminiscences. Orphaned soon after birth, the author—chubby little Lulu in the story—was reared by her grandmother on an estate in Northern Ireland. It was a pre-serpent Eden, those acres of fragrant loveliness named the Hermitage. They stretched out in Wordsworthian tranquility over the hills and streams of Monahan near the Armagh border. The moonlight slept sweet upon the jail in Cherry Tree Brae. Within memory no prisoner had invaded the jailer's privacy. When the Assize judges came to sit, they were presented with white gloves, symbol of the county's sinlessness.

But Lulu dwelled in no mere negative paradise, no lotus-eater's vacuum. Grandma, Irish chatelaine of the Hermitage, was a dynamic soul, as efficient as she was wise and gracious. She kept things stirring—Lulu and her two boy cousins, the "girls and boys" of her far-flung staff, the ritual sponge-cake batter, the tinker caravans. A Calvinist herself, she supervised the black fasts of her Catholic retainers and allowed Lulu to worship with the Episcopalians. Nonconformist Aaay-men and Episcopal Ahmen—Grandma's God had a sympathetic ear for both. She broke with her creed over the excommunication of a young choir singer who had "gone out with" a handsome Catholic.

In Grandma's system of social engineering no "girl" or "boy" was ever discharged from the Hermitage. Plump Scottish Essie hounded Lulu with warnings of an Allseeing, Omnipresent Eye. When resultant theological nightmares spoiled the child's sleep Grandma married Essie off.

Humor runs riot in this memoir, like the hawthorne blossoms and the fuchsia. And often as not religion is the wellspring of the laughter. Lulu's governess, Miss Hasty, walked her charge three miles to a revival meeting. The red-haired revivalist broke out in a fire-and-brimstone exhortation. While sinners rushed into his arms to be saved Lulu kept aloof in unregenerate boredom. "Ah, little girl, are ye waiting for Jesus?" asked the preacher as he threw evangelical arms about her. "I'm waiting for Miss Hasty," was the reply.

In the Hermitage kitchen, where a small pitcher could have large ears, the *specialité de la maison* was compounded of ingredients nutritious for a kindergartner—gossip, fun, and affection. Grandma and her cooks were artists, not dieticians. Imagination and ceremony went into every dish, whether destined for family dinner or a ducal outdoor banquet at which half the county was wined and dined. Some of the most atmospheric pages in "Grandma Did It This Way" are given over to recipes, for potables as well as edibles. County Monahan Pernico takes off ambrosially from a gallon of whisky.

If enough of the human race stays around long enough someone is sure to compile an anthology of womanly valor. I herewith stake out space for the tale of Grandma, her sick grandson, and the Sham Fight between Fenians and Orangemen. Let somebody else take the chapter on the mother of the Gracchi.

Personal History Notes

HITCH YOUR WAGON: The Story of Bernt Balchen, by Clayton Knight and Robert C. Durham. Bell Publishing Co., Drexel Hill, Pa. $3.50. This book proves that a man can be safe in the hands of his friends. Clayton Knight served in both world wars and has known Bernt Balchen from 'way back. Robert Durham, just about born when Knight first took to the air, served with Balchen in the Norwegian resistance movement and elsewhere. Balchen, as he ought to be, is a hero to both generations, but that does not hurt this book, which is essentially straightforward, nonlyrical reporting. In 1928 Balchen, on the Byrd expedition, piloted the first airplane ever to fly over the South Pole. In 1930 President Hoover decorated him with the Congressional Medal of Honor. On the very steps of the White House Balchen was served with a document ordering his deportation: he had technically broken his residence by going to Antarctica. A peppery little Congressman

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

ENGLISH POET & LIBRETTIST (1836-1911)

After identifying the fifteen literary figures briefly described below, print their names in the spaces just above the descriptions. The initial letters will spell the name of a famous English poet and librettist. Allowing twenty-five points for his name, and five points for each character identified, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 26.

1. — — — — — —
   The notorious canary trainer arrested by Sherlock Holmes.
2. — — — — — — — — —
   She wore a green hat *pour le sport.*
3. — — — — — — — — — — —
   Amber St. Clare's first husband.
4. — — — — — — — — — — —
   To end a war she persuaded Athenian women to go on a sex strike.
5. — —
   Jupiter transformed this maiden into a heifer.
6. — — — — —
   He was a heathen Chinee and a card sharp.
7. — — — — — —
   Magician in the court of King Arthur.
8. — — — — — — — — — —
   A Burma girl who smoked king-sized cigarettes.
9. — — — — — — — — — —
   Because of facial scars he was known as the Man Who Laughs.
10. — — — — — — —
    Sole survivor in the wreck of the whaler *Pequod.*
11. — — — — — — — — — —
    Robin Hood's right-hand man.
12. — — — — — —
    He was willin'.
13. — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
    David Copperfield's stepfather.
14. — —
    Egyptian sun god found in crossword puzzles.
15. — — — — —
    Friend and business associate of Shylock.

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named La Guardia heard about this (but not from Balchen) and rushed through a bill granting Balchen immediate citizenship. Balchen's service in the Second World War was an anticlimax only to the extent that nobody heard much about it. The omission is compensated for in this book, which is a balanced recital of a remarkable and striking career whereof, one may confidently hope, fresh chapters of accomplishment remain to be written.

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

THEM WAS THE DAYS, by Martha Ferguson McKeown. Macmillan. $3.50. Two years ago, Martha Ferguson McKeown published a fresh and vivid account of the experiences of her uncle, Mont Hawthorne, in the salmon canneries and salteries of Oregon and the Aleutians in the Eighties, and in the Klondike Gold Rush of the late Nineties. Telling his story in his own language, she succeeded in making it an absorbing eye-witness account of the Northern frontier. All who read "The Trail Led North" will hear with enthusiasm that Mrs. McKeown and her uncle are back with a new book. This time, however, Mrs. McKeown's part in the writing is much more evident. Large as his contribution may be, Mont is a literary device, albeit a remarkably effective one, for Mrs. McKeown to pour out all that she has been able to learn about her grandparents, Mont's father and mother; and the real heroine of the book is that unconquerable grandmother, Martha Lupher Hawthorne.

Mont was born in 1865 on a Revolutionary land-grant in Northwestern Pennsylvania. When he was five the family moved to Virginia in an effort to get away from "fever ague." They settled on a tobacco farm in Lunenburg County, south of Richmond, only to discover that the soil had been looted by tobacco-raisers who had gone on to literally greener fields; what remained was a bricklike red earth, which would grow a little scrub pine and practically nothing else. The Hawthornes hung on grimly for three years but in the end were starved out.

Beguiled by railroad land-promotion literature, in 1873 they took up a homestead claim in the Middle Loup valley of central Nebraska. Not since Mari Sandoz's memorable biography of her father have we had so graphic an account of what it cost in flesh and spirit to settle the plains. Preyed upon at every turn by speculators and the more honestly voracious grasshoppers, nothing raised for three years but a bonded indebtedness against the land, the Hawthornes eventually were starved out in Nebraska, too. Sam Hawthorne had no luck hunting gold in the Black Hills or freighting flour into the mining camps, and he and Mont tried their hand at construction work for the Union Pacific in Colorado, Martha meanwhile keeping a boarding house in Grand Island. Then for two years Mont and his father worked in the coal mines in the Carbon Basin of Wyoming. Mont could see no future in that, and in the summer of '83 he boarded an emigrant train to San Francisco, whence he took ship for Astoria and the adventures Mrs. McKeown has already published.

It is America itself Mrs. McKeown writes about, the shaping of our country and the forging of our social conscience. Occasionally she is a touch sententious; paragraphs here and there could have been dispensed with, and sometimes Mont is too obviously merely the vehicle for the real story Mrs. McKeown is concerned to tell. But on the whole she writes with an extraordinary deftness and a fine compression, making the most of both her material and her method. As readable as a novel, making effective use, indeed, of a novelist's devices, her book is also history of the first water and should have lasting value. The omission of an index is therefore to be regretted.

—DALE L. MORGAN.

DRAGGERMAN'S HAUL, by Ellery Thompson. Viking. $3. Captain Thompson is a "character" in the Yankee sense of that word. It is a role taken in every fishing port by one man or another. Their wit is saltier than the wit of ordinary old salts; also it is required, in some amusing cases, that they should lift themselves a little above the cultural level of the fish piers. Instead of shaking their heads sadly at the artist, they sit down to the easel and cause a little head-shaking on their own account. Captain Thompson has done this; more, he has written a book explaining himself, his trade, his esthetic endeavors, and the true meaning of life.

He calls it "the personal history of a Connecticut fishing captain." It will be an interesting book to those who know the author and the ports in which he has worked. There are, of course, innumerable anecdotes, so judiciously spread through the narrative that a man can hardly help thinking that it wasn't Captain Thompson's hand that did the spreading. In fact, it is the presence of a tired writing hand in the style and content that, long before the end, provokes the remark: here is a good chance lost. A personal history ought at least to have a vocabulary quite close to the one used by the subject in his daily life. This nearness can be an artistic effort (not expected here) or it can be just the plain truth set down in a natural flow. What can one think of this phrase: "As a compensatory gesture . . ."? Again: ". . . to my biased, thirty-nine-year-old way of careless thinking. . . " Much of the book is marred by such oddities, which are bound to make the going hard for some people.

—EDMUND GILLIGAN.

"Well, if I was marooned on a desert island and could take only one book, Professor Bates, I believe I would choose the Boy Scouts' manual."

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Cultivate a Hobby

IT IS a paradox of our civilization that even as we are contemplating the possibility of the extinction of society by man's implements of destruction we are simultaneously concerned with the means of rendering life rewarding for the mounting number of those for whom man's mastery of the medical and biological sciences is extending the span of existence. The problem of the aged, and of the aging whose vigor is increasingly being maintained by the advances of medicine against the degenerative diseases, has become a very real one in present-day society. It is no longer merely a question of what to do to give comfort to the indigent aged, or contentment to those unhappy old whose place in the family circle has become one of difficult adjustment to the younger generations, but of how to extend, for their owners' satisfaction and the public good, abilities still having a high potential of usefulness.

Business, governmental, and educational institutions have, many of them, arbitrary retirement ages, based on an expectation of disabilities which may or may not apply today, and which frequently lop off activity when it is still at the peak. The increasing competition for employment and the determination of the unions to spread the emoluments of labor to the many, together with their demand for greater leisure and social security for the workers, added to the normal incidence of old age, are rapidly producing a vast population which, with energies still active, has little or no outlet for those energies.

In this situation, the creative artist, be he writer or painter or musician, is, of course, at an advantage. His work has never been dependent upon the decisions and regulations of others and its output and possibilities are determined by his own capacities and will to concentrate. But the creative artist is, after all, but a small fraction of the intellectual and esthetic professions, if they may be so called, the greater part of which is composed of those who work under the direction of others as teachers or journalists, publicity and advertising agents, commercial artists and musicians. It is this preponderant group of persons for whom the enforced leisure of an old age in which the urge to self-expression is still quick poses a problem which is one not only of the contentment of the individual but of the saving of wastage for society. How are the still vigorous interests of this group, their accumulated experience, and their keen desire to continue active pursuits to be put to use?

The colleges have made a beginning of solving the problem by offering to some of the emeritus holders of important chairs in the larger universities positions in smaller institutions which thereby secure for their students a caliber of teaching to which they could not aspire under other conditions. This is an excellent beginning but it, of course, reaches only a few, and the problem is of the many.

American society has been brought up—or at least prewar society was brought up—on a belief in making wise provision for the future. To save for a rainy day, to make hay while the sun shone, were familiar adages of the past, speaking the homely wisdom of the people. The time has now come for the prudence which was counseled in material matters to be extended to wider fields.

No time is too soon to begin an advance attack on old age with the perhaps unwelcome leisure it holds in store, not even the early years of youth when careers are not yet even in bud. The schools, indeed, could be a potent factor in building against the future need by introducing into their curriculum some of the techniques of research and analysis which, properly mastered, would later be tools to occupation. A good healthy hobby is the delight of youth and could well be the resource of old age. And hobbies are multifold and of multifold usefulness. There can be no better bulwark against the tedium of nonemployment than the pursuit of some interest that may be made to yield useful returns in the way of knowledge or practical information. Dozens of civic activities, numbers of scholarly and even scientific fields could profit immeasurably from the leisure of the old who turned the hobbies of youth and middle age into the pursuits of their declining years. It may be too late to develop new interests in the sunset of life but it is not too late to turn those already developed to useful purpose. Whether it is a fancy for history, or an enjoyment of statistics, or observations on nature the amateur may not only draw delight from his study of them but may indeed well add to the sum of knowledge on them. To follow a wise hobby is to take time by the forelock by developing a reservoir of possibilities against the years empty of accustomed duties. —A. L.

Carl Van Doren

THERE are few men, however well known in their fields of endeavor, who are irreplaceable. Carl Van Doren was surely one of the irreplaceables. He was a scholar, editor, critic, historian, biographer, but, beyond the qualities that had made him pre-eminent in so many directions, he was a tenacious liberal, a patriotic American, and, above all, one of the last exemplars of an almost forgotten tradition, the "man of letters" endowed with wisdom, eloquence, and common sense. He came from the soil of the prairies, he taught rhetoric in his state university, and from 1911 to 1930 was a lecturer and teacher of English in Columbia University. It was a fortunate coincidence for American literature that the timely development of his critical faculties enabled him to understand immediately the significance of the young writers who were in revolt against the literary traditions of the past. His advice and aid were always at the command of young aspirants, so that he became both a pioneer and creator of the American literary renaissance.

In his middle age he turned to biography and eighteenth-century American history. His life of Swift and his "Benjamin Franklin," which won the Pulitzer Prize, rapidly became standard works. Toward the end of the war he published "The Great Rehearsal," a scholarly and yet intensely moving account of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, which was prefaced by two books on the American Revolution. These works written, it was said, "in the grand tradition," were largely responsible for the increased public interest in the early history of the United States. Beyond his scholarship and his many books, there was the man, tall and rugged, his witty and brilliant conversation, his encyclopedic memory, his capacity for friendship. —H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sex on Page One

SIR: There's the story of the two cowboys coming to town after a long stretch on the range. One went to eat, the other to the saloon, where his friend found him an hour later in a manifestly crooked poker game. "It's a crooked game," the gambler was told, "better quit." "I can't," was the reply. "It's the only game in town."

My two newspapers, each in communities of about 7,000 people, have none of the circulation problems of *The New York Post* or *Herald Tribune* ["Can Newspapers Survive Without Sex?," *SRL* June 24]. I've the only ones in town.

James Wechsler and I are no more in the same business than we were fifteen years ago at Columbia when, as classmates, we were hurling cheerful insults at each other. But I am forced to concede that Jimmy finally is seeing life in America from a more realistic perspective than was the case from '32 to '35. I find it a pleasing revelation that he concedes that the most basic and significant self-evident truths will be ignored by the general public if they are also dull.

When you publish newspapers of some 2,000 circulation for a public you know, with few exceptions, by first name, you find it an easy task to know why *PM* and *The Sun* die and why an earnest overplay of the sins of Ingrid makes *The Post* and *The News* prosper like the green bay. Newspapers not only have no influence in molding public opinion; generally they find themselves unable to follow it.

Be it on the teeming streets of midtown Manhattan, where I was born and bred, or out here in the rolling resort hills of Southern California, where I plan to live and die, people buy and read newspapers and magazines for certain elementary reasons, and for these reasons alone: they want material with which to while away idle minutes in frothy escape from mundanity; they want their egos fattened with the food supplied by applauding recognition of their mundane activity; they seek shreds of the false fabric which enables them to indulge in the cheerful fiction that they have points of superiority over those who manifestly are their betters in every regard.

Sex in the audacious raw answers two of these three demands. Sex, as you have discovered, Jimmy, is truly the opiate of the masses. Pie in the sky is not nearly as effective a block to significant social consciousness as is preoccupation with a toss in the hay, last night's or tomorrow's.

Time was when the message was the thing, J. W., and if you were unwilling to hear it through despite the tedium and believe, you were either peasant or Fascist. Now, like me, he concedes it doesn't matter who agrees providing they'll buy and read.

Tear down the barricades.

M. J. WIHNYK.

Beaumont, Calif.

SIR: James Wechsler concludes his argument for mixing sex and liberalism this way: "Occasionally I hear someone murmuring, 'After all, circulation isn't everything.' I philosophically concede the point, but I would hate to argue it with a corpse."

Mr. Wechsler's defense, such as it is, is admirably refuted by Maxwell Anderson in "Off Broadway": "To keep going every newspaper has to print all kinds of things that don't come near whatever journalistic ideals you have. You are the judge, you and your fellow editors, of how far you can go toward trash and still retain your self-respect. But cross that line, wherever it is, lose faith in your standards, and go over to the mere dispensing of thrills and gossip, and from there on it doesn't matter what you decide or what your paper prints. It may make money for a while, but it will be despised and forgotten as rapidly as possible."

MARTIN SALDITCH.

Philadelphia, Pa.

SIR: Sex being essential, candid treatment of it would seem to be essential to good journalism; but as both editors have failed to point out, it must be treated with discretion. Neither of the editors, I feel sure, would have indecent pictures appear on his front page or anywhere throughout the paper. Then why do they let indecently written stories cover page one? Printing sex stories is not wrong unless they are written up in a wrong way. Words paint pictures, and if painted with too bold hues they naturally will excite the primitive emotions of any man or woman, as will a picture containing the same stimuli. If this be so, it would seem that the stories are enhancing sex crime. I would suggest to the newspapers: put some clothes on your stories or some blinders on your clientele.

GEORGE A. TICE.

Kansas City, Mo.

SIR: My wife and I have subscribed to *The Post* for the past two years; we think it is a wonderful newspaper, but we fully agree with August Heckscher's point of view. We stopped reading the superficial and stereotype serials very soon but continue to value the paper mainly for its editorials and columnists.

HANS WYNBERG.

Madison, Wis.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"And while I cannot prove she has been in the witches' organization, she has been consistently following their line."

Rapid Reading

SIR: There seems to be a controversy brewing in the pages of the *SRL* about rapid reading. The controversy stems, it seems to me, from ignorance of the fact that different materials should be read differently. One should not, for example, read Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, or other great American writers as fast as he reads 99 per cent of the modern novels. One should gauge his speed of reading according to his purpose in reading. Certainly a mystery story should be read at top speed, while an article on relativity or a novel by Henry James should be read analytically and slowly, with frequent pauses for note taking, whether mental or otherwise. But to deny the value of reading courses in this modern age of print is to turn one's back on twenty years of research and plod back to the dark ages of reading.

WILLIAM D. BAKER, JR.

South Bend, Ind.

SIR: "Rapid reading courses," wrote Dr. Orton, "are the radical enemies of literature." These courses are rather new, their long-term results not yet known, but it seems clear the rapid reader, ever trying to turn pages more and more quickly, will become the tidbit thinker. Later, as he almost remembers what he nearly understood, this speeded-reader, however fluent, is certain to speak or write only sketchily.

MABEL WYETH.

Riverdale, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

I DO NOT happen to know John W. Griffin, but on the basis of a form letter he has written as president of Seaboard Publishers, Inc., I am persuaded he is an utterly sincere man. Seaboard Publishers are manufacturers of Comic Books, and Mr. Griffin is a person who approaches this sometimes unadmired industry as a realist and a reformer.

The little number he has sent my way as a trial balloon is, of all things, a comic-book edition of William Shakespeare's "Macbeth."* Like many another so-called comic, this cartoon version of Shakespeare's tragedy is not meant to be funny. Yet it must be catalogued as a comic if for no other reason than that it employs the methods and format of those polychrome publications which are usually so classified. The result, to put it mildly, is a production of "Macbeth" quite different from any to which the play has been exposed in its long and varied history.

Before coming to this new "Macbeth" it seems only fair to let Mr. Griffin explain the service he thought he was performing by undertaking it. Did I say Mr. Griffin was at once a realist and a reformer? Let me make both points clear. Mr. Griffin reminds us that over forty million comic magazines are sold each month and nearly 200 titles are regularly published, ranging, as he puts it, "all the way from the completely harmless to some which are highly objectionable." Furthermore, he says, and he ought to know, though it depresses me to share this knowledge, that such books "are about the only reading matter purchased by many children and an increasing number of adults."

"The comics are here—and here to stay," states he, as if any parent would challenge him. Mr. Griffin's lofty aim, therefore, is to make the best of a bad situation by providing "as fine a 'comic book' as it is possible to produce." The first step toward doing this, he believes, is to derive comics from authors who have "real cultural worth." Hence this "Macbeth."

In reading this "Macbeth" Mr. Griffin urges us to keep in mind the audience for which it has been written: "first, the adult who has read few, if any, solid, substantial books; and, second, the high-school student who is seeking an auxiliary aid to his high-school work." Mr. Griffin is well aware that his "Macbeth" is not "an effective substitute for the original." His hope is, however, that it will serve as a sufficient indication of "this great drama's . . . breadth and power" to lead perhaps some readers to Shakespeare himself.

A slight but not unwarranted uncertainty seems to have Mr. Griffin in its grip. At one moment he confidently risks the guess that his comic-book "Macbeth" will be recognized "as an interesting experiment in literature." At the next he invites a candid opinion as to whether it "will serve any good purpose" and if other such Shakespearean comics should be released.

My last desire is to be impolite to so well-meaning a fellow as Mr. Griffin. But, since he has asked for candor, candor he shall have. Mr. Griffin, it seems to me, is about as wrong-headed in his pursuit of what is right as it is possible to be. He is not lonely in his errors. Like many another, he appears to have been misguided by his good intentions. Indeed, he and his benevolent associates at Seaboard have, *in my opinion, succumbed in* the name of literacy, culture, or what you will, to a list of fallacies based upon misconceptions so widespread that they merit discussion.

In fairness to Mr. Griffin and his firm it must be admitted that they are not the first offenders in a misleading practice. They are merely followers of a false tradition. There have been so-called Classic Comics for some time; comics masquerading as educational which have sought to turn such defenseless novels as "The Three Musketeers," "Ivanhoe," "Don Quixote," "Moby Dick," "The Last of the Mohicans," or "Huckleberry Finn" into blood brothers of L'il Abner, the Lone Ranger, Captain Marvel, Gandy and Sourpuss, Flash Gordon, and Mandrake the Magician.

These have been bad enough. That they were designed to do good I am willing to concede, but that they have succeeded in doing good I cannot bring myself to believe. They have had no other choice than to make molehills out of mountains and mudpies out of classics. For the misapprehension underlying them is the same one which lies behind this comic-book "Macbeth." In its fashion they have confused one medium with another. They have reduced good writing to crude drawing. They have offered chromos with captions, asking their readers to accept them as masterpieces. They have peddled what is not even a substitute and pretended it was an equivalent. They have become victims of the false notion that those who might just as well be illiterates can be made lovers of literature by reading an aggressively unliterary version of a classic. Moreover, they have deceived American youngsters by inducing them to accept as truth an untruth apparently subscribed to by many of their elders; namely, that to know the story an author tells is not only to know the author and his book but to have shared in the pleasures and distinctions of his writing.

GROSS as the vulgarities of these earlier Classic Comics have been, their offenses somehow seem mild compared to those which this cartoon "Macbeth" is bound to commit. To rob a prose writer of his prose can be, depending upon the writer in question, either petty or grand larceny. But to rob a sublime poet of his

STUNNED BY MACDUFF'S REVELATION, MACBETH REFUSES TO FIGHT UNTIL MACDUFF SPRINGS FIERCELY UPON HIM!
I WILL NOT YIELD! LAY ON, MACDUFF, AND CURSED BE HIM WHO FIRST CRIES "HOLD, ENOUGH!"

—From the book.

*MACBETH, by William Shakespeare. No. 6 in a Treasury of Celebrated Literature; Stories by Famous Authors Illustrated. Adapted as a Comic Book by Dana E. Dutch, illustrated by H. C. Kiefer, lettered by H. G. Ferguson. New York: Seaboard Publishers, Inc. 30 pp. 10¢.

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poetry and a supreme dramatist of the form at which he excelled is mayhem plus murder in the first degree.

Much as I love them, I have to confess that when Charles and Mary Lamb collaborated on their "Tales from Shakespeare" they set a bad example. Without their realizing it, they were opening wide the sluice-gates for future generations of lesser synopses manufacturers and addicts. Their hope was to earn a needed penny and to help a publisher friend. Elia had no illusions about the results. "I think it will be popular among the little people," wrote he. He was right. It was. Yet I doubt if he foresaw how numerous the "little people" were even then, how their numbers would multiply down the decades, and how abundantly they would, in our times, include alleged grownups in their ranks.

Lamb's endeavor to reduce Shakespeare to childish terms can, of course, be dismissed as one of the paradoxes of his nature. Although one of the most stagestruck of mortals, he is famous for his contention that because of "their distinguished excellence . . . the plays of Shakespeare are less calculated for performance on a stage than those of almost any other dramatist whatever." What led Elia into this deliberate half-smiling overstatement was his intense adoration of the inner glories of Shakespeare's texts, the subtleties of which he thought were beyond scenic imprisonment and the mouthings and frownings of players. All Lamb really meant was that he preferred to have his imagination left free and to have it serve him in his library as his own director, his own designer, and his own cast.

What Elia as the Bard's first nursery-popularizer would say of this new Mandrake-the-Magician adaptation of "Macbeth" I tremble to think. My conviction is that he would be outraged by every picture and every caption on every page of the whole melancholy proceedings. For this very reason he would, no doubt, blush Kremlin-red because of his own share in the "Tales" which, though the work of angels compared to the witches' brew of this present-day "Macbeth," inadvertently prepared the way for it.

ALTHOUGH I have sat through many revivals of the tragedy, some of which have claimed their scattered excellences but most of which have been inadequate, I never expected to be confronted with a production as wretched as the one these well-meaning publishers have made in the hope of tempting young people of all ages to Shakespeare. The plot is there, faithfully followed yet whittled down to its bare essentials, with all its excitements gone, its tensions lost, its scenes denied the suspense and terror of their building. Snippets of the original dialogue are here and there to be encountered, running true for a sentence or two, then suddenly being cut, colloquialized, or altered so that the song of the speeches is muted, their sense abandoned, their grandeur destroyed. What once soared no longer has wings to flutter. It is earth-bound throughout, a travesty of itself, and by its very solemnity almost a travesty of the ineptitudes of comics, too. Although the tale is murderous and

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gory, it never rises beyond cheap horror into true tragedy.

If the language deflates the drama, so do the drawings. The colors are hideous. The human figures are empty parodies of what the parts demand. The witches are Dogpatch ugly without being Dogpatch funny, and the medieval backgrounds are scenery of so outmoded a kind that even Edwin Forrest would have refused to play before them. The mystery of darkness, the supernatural terrors of the heath, the agonies of introspection, the drive and depth of the drama, indeed its greatness which in the theatre or in the library is its excuse and glory—all these are pitifully missing. What is left is not a tragedy. It is trashcan stuff.

Certainly no one can be hurt by knowing the story of "Macbeth." Yet just as surely no one can pretend to know "Macbeth" who knows only its story and has encountered it in such a form. This is the glaring delusion to which Mr. Griffin and his confreres have surrendered in the interest of what they apparently believe, and would have their readers young and old believe, is "culture."

A final comment on their comic-book "Macbeth" is the note on its garish cover, "Adapted from the Original Text for EASY and ENJOYABLE Reading!" Perhaps one of the reasons so many people in this country have been left uneducated by their educations is that everything is made too easy for them. To be understood and enjoyed, the great works, which are the products of strong feeling or hard thinking, require similar responses. Giving of the best, they demand the best, to be appreciated. They cannot be vulgarized without being violated. Theirs is an integrity no less than a beauty which should summon from us an integrity of our own.

The difference between Shakespeare's "Macbeth" and Seaboard's is too great for comfort and almost great enough for nausea. Give me L'il Abner and Daisy Mae any day. Please, Mr. Griffin and your high-minded associates, stop trying to create "culture" by deriving comics from authors who, in your unhappy phrase, "have real cultural worth." Let us have comics which are comics, not classics which have ceased to be classics but have dwindled into comics. Leave the masterpieces unraped. Don't fool yourselves and us by pretending that what they are not is what you would have us believe they are. Don't be guilty of trying to make everything easy. Greatness in literature is bound to present its challenges if not its difficulties. This is one of the reasons for its being enjoyable.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

FICTION

(*Continued from page* 14)

now, when all was lost, he was ready to stake all in one more venture.

It is not quite easy to transfer our detestation of totalitarian Communism to this dead German Communist who has stayed young in his fight against Fascism. But we are entitled to wonder whether Anna Seghers, by reducing the conflict almost entirely to the Communist vs. Fascist issue, has done justice to the whole picture.

Atom-Bombing Here

SHADOW ON THE HEARTH. By Judith Merril. New York: Doubleday & Co. 277 pp. $3.

By HARRISON SMITH

THE ATOMIC bomb falling from space ships on our cities was a popular subject for science-fiction writers some time before American bombs ruined Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since then several writers have attempted to describe what would happen to us in an atomic war in which the enemy attacked our principal cities suddenly and without warning. Nearly all of them asked too much of the reader's imagination or his courage to face seriously universal disaster and death from the effects of radiation or mass starvation. H. G. Wells in "The War of the Worlds" and in "Kips" had shown that the reader's imagination could be stirred in this kind of novel by bringing chaos and fear into the life of a single and unimportant individual. It is this device, if so obvious an idea can be called a device, that gives reality and force to Judith Merril's "Shadow on the Hearth," the account of what happened to a capable wife and mother in a suburb of New York after atomic warfare destroyed most of the city.

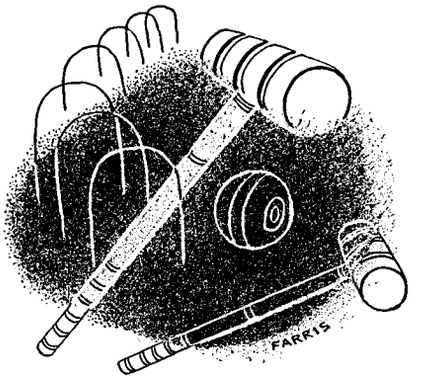
It is remarkable that it has not occurred to other writers that this awesome and frightening story could be best told by a woman and preferably a suburban housewife. A man inevitably would be forced into action outside the home; he would have to join the Army or Medical Corps, a relief squad, or decontamination unit. His experiences would be on too broad a scale; he would see too much and have to recount too many horrors. In this novel the action is entirely within the walls of a house; the terror comes only through radio and telephone.

The day it started was like all other days in Gladys Mitchell's life. Her husband commuted to his office in the city in the morning, annoyed because he had later to call on a customer in upper New York. Adolescent Barbie and little Ginny went off to school; Mrs. Mitchell may have unwittingly saved her life by deciding not to go to town to lunch. Then came a flash of light and a curiously ominous cloud. An hour later the radio began to pour out its messages: New York, Washington, Detroit, and other great cities destroyed. Advice followed, and the news of medical and safety units moving into action. "Don't leave your home; bar your windows and doors; wait for help; telephone if you must to radiation and police centers!" Then the children came home, the smallest one carrying a toy horse soaked by a burst of rain outside the school. But Jon, her husband, did not return. Was he alive or dead?

With every day the situation of the little household grows more alarming. A science teacher suspected of treasonable ideas is hidden away in the cellar. The house is attacked at night by a gang of marauders, the gas fails, the water is about to be cut off. The little girl's hair begins to fall out from the atomic rays she has absorbed from her toy, and she is taken to a hospital crowded with the injured and dying. But somehow the woman finds the courage to go ahead. A young doctor who becomes attached to the family helps all of them; the oldest daughter grows up almost overnight; an old servant finds her way to the house. Then suddenly the war is over, and Jon stumbles home.

The moral that runs through the story is almost too obvious. Men and women can go through the worst disasters if they are not conquered by fear or doubt but go bravely about their allotted tasks. A united family is the solid base on which civilization rests.

Just what would have happened to all of them if the enemy had kept up a rain of atomic bombs and if the United States had not developed push-button warfare can best be left to the imagination.



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Making Paper Dolls of a Ph.D. Thesis

MAIDEN VOYAGE. By Barnaby Dogbolt. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 320 pp. $3.

By NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THIS man with the improbable name of Barnaby Dogbolt (he is, as a matter of fact, a reputable pharmacologist with quite another name) writes what can only be described as escape literature—escape, as it seems, from all the weight of his professorial life with pharmacology. Dogbolt, as we shall call him, runs madly in every direction, wagging a delirious tale and cocking his hind leg with purposeful delight at every pillar of respectability. In this instance he is writing about another professor, one Saltmarsh of the English faculty at Tyburn U., a specialist known for his paper on "Elizabethan Word-Patterns in the Great Smokies," and now a Guckenheimer Fellow armed with $5,000 and a project: the biography of an obscure English metaphysical poet named William Charnelhouse.

Now, anybody who has had even the slightest contact with that ancient institution, the doctoral thesis, knows what a house of cards it is, how vulnerable it is to the sacrilegious finger, how it cries to be toppled. Dogbolt leaps upon it with a howl and kicks it to the seven winds. It is certainly going to be hard for anyone who has read the adventures of Professor Saltmarsh on the trail of Charnelhouse, through Cambridge and Ughtre, to regard any of the minor metaphysical bards with a straight face again—or the majors either. Dogbolt is very good with the machinery of scholarship; he strips all its gears and strews it lovingly with sand. He can write bad metaphysical quatrains that are convincing. He can tick off the Cambridge dons, the modern British poets, the American professorial gentry, to the last intoned syllable. It is a pleasure to watch him knocking these pates together gleefully, to the accompaniment of shrieks unholy from the ghost of the lecherous Charnelhouse. (For, of course, poor Saltmarsh discovers a lot more than he knows what to do with.)

There are some objections to be raised. Dogbolt, in his heated determination to tickle us to the core, keep us laughing, and begging for more, is far from satisfied with the one Saltmarsh gambit. Upon this he superimposes another: the adventures of another American who travels with the professor. This is Arnie Gresco, the self-consciously rough-neck Chicagoan, who has come to open the English market to a tonic he calls Bomb of Gilead. He is as hard and knowing as Saltmarsh is innocent. He plays the pander and leads the professor a merry chase after ladies and such, all under the unsettling influence of the Bomb. Some of it is amusing; more of it is not. It doesn't add anything to the sly humor of Saltmarsh's adventures in England, except a harsh, Chicago hiccough. To top this, the tireless Dogbolt has yielded all through the book to a strange compulsion toward one joke, and a very dubious one: the one about the outhouse, with variants. The professor's and Arnie's mishaps with excretory affairs, one way or another, occur with marked regularity, and they are scarcely as gay as Dogbolt must have thought them. This kind of running gag seems to indicate a curious lack of confidence in his own best efforts. Come now, Dogbolt—one pratfall per book is quite enough. You don't need them.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 371

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 371 will be found in the next issue.

ZYABXWB CDVT OFL

TNXW KVDOXVWH VC

OFL FXHOVDE VC OFL

RVDMA, HV CND,

ZYHOXSL XH NMRNEH

XW ZLVKNDAE.

R. RFXOTNW

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 370

No one lies so boldly as the man who is indignant.

F. W. NIETZSCHE.

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mr. saturday

to discuss

poetry

and opinion

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Fiction Notes

STANFORD SHORT STORIES, 1950, edited by Wallace Stegner. Stanford University Press. $3. Since the passing of Edward J. O'Brien it seems to me that the American short story has been lacking in imaginative vision — that energic light that creates and distils experience and converts it into power. O'Brien was a great directive hand in the development of the American short story for he was a critic of rare imagination and discernment, a man of instinctive fine feeling and taste, and these qualities he fostered in the young writers of his time. He was essentially a poet and so he saw with the imaginative eye. I do not believe that his successor critics possess this native intelligence, for they fumble erratically, without that almost unerring sense for excellence that O'Brien had.

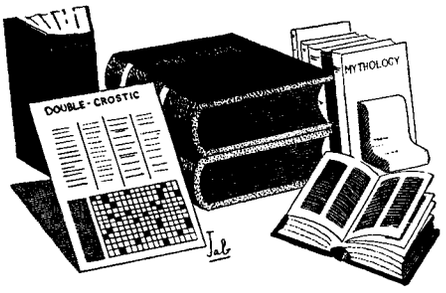
The present volume should perhaps not be judged too strictly for it contains the work of new writers in the creative-writing classes at Stanford University. The best of these new writers is Clay Putnam, a twenty-six-year-old Oklahoman. His two stories, "The Wounded" and "The Old Acrobat and the Ruined City," reveal a masterly craftsmanship and a vigorous imagination. He writes with power and intensity, the true signs of a first-rate writer, and his style is robust, clean, and tight. I dare say that Mr. Putnam is a real discovery and if he continues the excellence he has shown in these two stories he will be a name American fiction will have to reckon with.

The other writer whose work stands out in this volume is P. H. Lowrey, of Mississippi, of the same age as Putnam. "Big Chlorinda, Happy Chlorinda" is a weave of characterizations expertly and beautifully done.

The rest of the stories are, at best, journeyman work, competent but without much distinction. Putnam and Lowrey are the virtues of this book. —José Garcia Villa.

THE BURNING GLASS, by John Franklin Bardin. Scribner's. $3. Mr. Bardin, a writer of mystery stories, now turns attention to the mores of the intellectuals. Although his novel is uneven it is distinguished for excellent characterization and for an almost cinematic manner of telling its story, worthy of that master of this style, Graham Greene. The action takes place at a summer colony and is compressed into one day from dawn to midnight.

Chief characters are a young married couple. The husband is a serious scientist and the wife a modernist poet. He is a relatively decent



(or perhaps one should say inhibited) young man who cannot quite understand the easy-going musicians and artists his wife knows; nor can he quite trust or like the famous scientist who has become rich by popularizing pseudo-science and who turns out to be the hidden cause of all the trouble which bursts out at the Mozart concert. Mark calls on this scientist and thereby loses a rare fly he has trapped; irritated, he turns to the wife of a musician. Here the author and the reader have a rollicking time while the former dissects a kind of woman rampant today. While Mark and this woman buy obscene jewelry and visit his secret cave, Ruth takes up with a stranger, rich and pseudo-chic, who has bought the local island. She lunches with him and his niece, and the author and the reader again have an ironically satisfactory time. It is in such situations that Mr. Bardin has an opportunity to reveal his singular flair for satire. The tragedy grows naturally out of the obscene drawings which are everywhere and the hidden spleen of a man who uses children for his nasty purposes. Mr. Bardin's portraits of the children are sensitive and delightful. There is an intricate weaving of many threads throughout; this is a subtle tale, stimulating to read —John Cournos.

THE STUBBORN HEART, by Frank G. Slaughter. Doubleday. $3. Mr. Slaughter's novel has to do with the problems faced by Julian Chisholm, a young Confederate Army surgeon on his return to the plantation of his youth. Mr. Slaughter has certainly not hesitated to bring in almost every type of problem that could have beset an individual living in the days of Southern Reconstruction. There is the daily struggle to get the plantation in working order again; there are foul plots hatched by the rapidly multiplying Ku Klux Klan; there are mortgages, quarrels, tremendous clashes between the two women in Dr. Chisholm's life, and heaven knows what else. The two women, by the way, are his wife, Jane — proud, independent, loyal, and true—, and his mistress, Lucy — blonde, beautiful, seductive, and w-i-c-k-e-d!

Mr. Slaughter's framework affords him ample opportunity for action and conflict and colorful description. Conflict between Julian and Jane — between Julian and Lucy, between Lucy and Jane. The only drawback is that the entire book is poorly written and the characters portrayed are grotesque and lurid exaggerations.

—Stephanie Benét.

SAVAGE GENTLEMAN, by Noel B. Gerson. Doubleday. $3. Mr. Gerson reveals himself to be a writer with an excellent memory, for in mixing the stuffs of which historical novels are made he has forgotten not a single ingredient. As background he has chosen a lesser known yet vital period in American history, Queen Anne's War (1702-13), and it is certainly an era worthy of close examination. When colonial Benjamin Church and his colonial army captured the citadel of Port Royal, French-Indian resistance was rendered impotent and the peace treaty of 1713 resulted in a forty-year respite from formal warfare. Jeffrey Wyatt is a splendid hero and as gallant a lover as Leah Hill and the Indian princess, Adiawando, could hope to have. His noble adventures, around which the story revolves, seem more colorful than those any real-life frontiersman could possibly have known. Like the courageous Pauline of movie fame, Jeffrey is exposed to a thousand perils, but is always rescued in the nick of time. Despite its slickness of style—or because of it—"Savage Gentleman" is an exciting and fast-paced story. If after reading it you find yourself scurrying to history books for additional documentation the author will no doubt feel doubly rewarded for his efforts.

—Joseph M. Grant.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Wilson. 2. Iris March. 3. Luke Channell. 4. Lysistrata. 5. Io. 6. Ah Sin. 7. Merlin. 8. Supiyawlat. 9. Gwynplaine 10. Ishmael. 11. Little John. 12. Barkis. 13. Edward Murdstone. 14. Ra. 15. Tubal. LIBRETTIST: William S. Gilbert.

Solution of Last Week's Double-Crostic (No. 852)

A. KOCH:
JEFFERSON AND MADISON
(THE GREAT COLLABORATION)

When Jefferson drew Madison into the nine-year cycle of preparatory work to create the University of Virginia and . . . to take over its direction after his death, the two friends were embarking upon . . . their last significant partnership.

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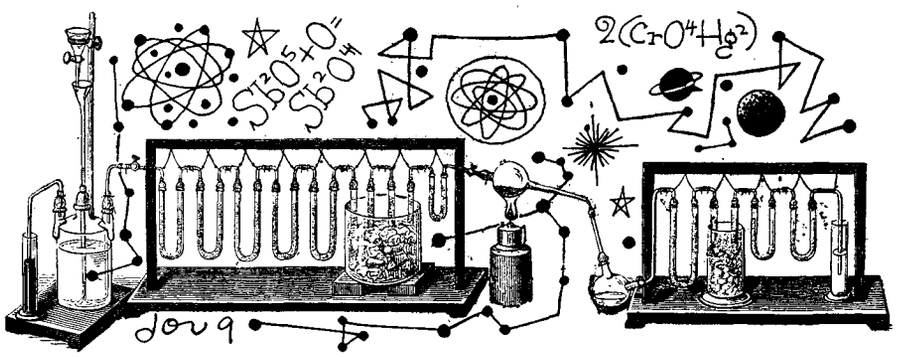
(*Continued from page 7*)

plete secrecy in both science and technology. Either line of argument appears to be logical. It is a real dilemma even before we add to it political arguments for freedom of speech.

These general remarks have no novelty and could be applied to any military preparations in history. But there are two new elements in our present situation. The first is the increasing importance of technology in war and the second is the disappearance of the time gap between basic scientific research and military technology. The increasing importance of technology is fundamental to the whole concept of modern warfare. The atomic bomb has dramatized it but there are many other products of applied science that are vital in modern armaments.

To solve this dilemma is not just



an exercise in logic. It is a practical necessity. A clear solution would be only possible if we knew exactly when we might have to defend ourselves in another war. If it were to be next year, we should choose complete secrecy; if we were sure that there would be no war for thirty years, we should abandon all secrecy. Evidently a middle course is necessary. A course which will make it possible to defend ourselves with vigor and success if we are attacked within the next few years and yet a course that can be followed for years without seriously weakening our democracy or our science.

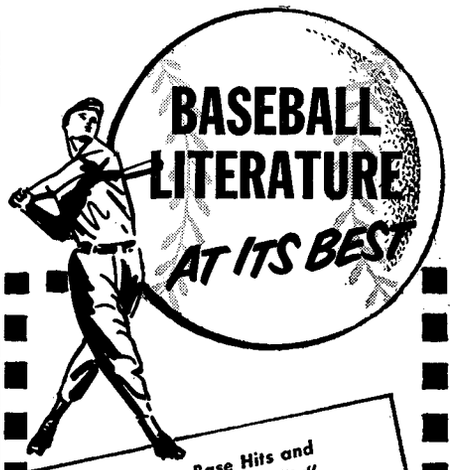
In attempting to make the most effective compromise the Atomic Energy Commission has, of course, consulted with other branches of the Government. In the light of these consultations and of its own knowledge of the problems and of the basic policy set by the McMahon Act, it has laid down two simplifying assumptions: (1) weapons information, including design, production, and stockpiles, should be secret; (2) basic science should be free except where it is directly related to weapons.

Unfortunately, these principles are easier to formulate than to apply. There is a twilight zone of information that does not automatically fall into either category. In judging such information we try to use a simple criterion. We ask the question: will the release of this information help us more than it will help our potential enemies? Again, the criterion is simple but applying it is difficult. We have a formal declassification guide as an aid, but it cannot be applied in a purely mechanical way.

As international tensions have increased the military aspects of our atomic-energy program have grown in importance and have been especially emphasized by the occurrences of recent months. These have included the President's announcement last September of evidence that the USSR had achieved an atomic explosion, the President's announcement of January 31 that he had directed the Commission to proceed with the development of atomic weapons including the so-called hydrogen bomb, and, finally, the conviction of Dr. Fuchs for espionage.

Naturally, we are continually reviewing our objectives and methods and at this time we are putting particular emphasis on doing so. Let me restate our objective: under the provisions of the Atomic Energy Act for control of restricted data in the fields of weapons, fissionable material, and power development, we are responsible for withholding from persons not entitled to have restricted data information which would be of help to a potential enemy in developing his weapons and power enterprises. We consider information that defines or indicates our own scale and rate of effort in the weapons field of particular importance.

We make one fundamental assumption that may seem debatable to some. We assume that it makes a great deal of difference who is giving out information. I shall return to a discussion of this assumption later but I state it now so that you can under-



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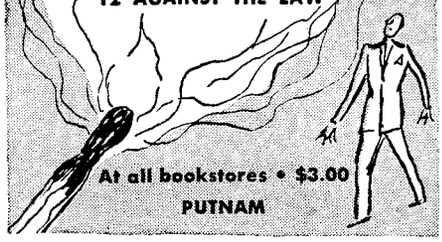

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stand the basis for the analysis of our problem which I will give. Our problem is concerned with men and information and can be understood best by defining first the categories of men involved and second the kinds of information they may give out.

We can list six categories of men who might write or say something about atomic energy that would help a potential enemy: (1) full-time employees of the Atomic Energy Commission or its contractors with access to classified data; (2) scientists who have had access to classified data or still do on a part-time basis; (3) scientists whose work is supported by the Atomic Energy Commission but without access to classified data; (4) entirely independent research workers who have never had access to classified work but who may turn up ideas of military value; (5) writers, lecturers, editors, columnists, or public officials who have had some access to classified data; (6) similar men who have had no official access but are shrewd enough to pick up significant information by interviews with informed people or even by guessing from published material.

THERE are three areas in which these men may write: (1) detailed technical articles of limited scope; (2) general articles or speeches of professional or popular level discussing the work of the Atomic Energy Commission or related topics, and (3) general articles or speeches primarily concerned with the political, moral, or military aspects of the work of the Atomic Energy Commission. In the latter two cases there are often estimates on rate or scale of effort or statements of problems and probabilities, and even, sometimes, stockpile estimates.

Simple arithmetic shows that eighteen categories of articles concern us in one way or another. Furthermore, there are practically no articles even vaguely related to atomic energy that would not fall into one of these categories. Evidently we must call on common sense to limit our activities, but let me make it clear that we cannot guarantee that there may not be damaging information appearing in any one of the eighteen categories. That is the reason why we are not able to set out a perfectly clear policy or a perfectly consistent practice. With the best intentions and the best advice, we are bound to make mistakes.

Let me deal with the simplest problems first. As one might expect, they are the extreme cases.

Detailed technical papers of limited scope give us the least trouble. If they are written by full-time project scientists our declassification system is perfectly satisfactory. The same applies almost equally well to former or part-time project men, except that we have to depend on voluntary cooperation. Another factor becomes of some importance here, the cooperation of the editors of technical journals who send us for clearance papers about which there may be doubt. This intervention by editors also helps with the third category of authors, those without access to classified material but supported by the Atomic Energy Commission; however in such cases we have set up an additional aid by appointing one man on each project to look out for discoveries that might need to be classified.

The number of authors of technical papers who are entirely independent is small. Here we depend entirely on their good sense and on the cooperation of editors. Actually, even if such articles are submitted we are not always sure that we should try to review them.

Writers, lecturers, and columnists are not likely to write technical articles. If they do and publish them in journals whose editors are not alert

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE HOUSE IN THE FOREST *Marten Cumberland* (Crime Club: $2.25)	Kidnapping, murder, and frenzied search for World War II jewel loot plague young couple honeymooning in Fontainbleau forest. Saturnin Dax steps in.	Dax sleuthing less impressive than in former tales. Plot idea good, people, scenes interesting, but story wanders.	Fair
POISONOUS RELATIONS *Joanna Cannan* (Morrow: $2.50)	Drop - word (hemlock) eliminates "paying guest" of hard-up British noble family. Scotland Yarder Price discovers killer.	Pleasant people, attractive English countryside scene, gentlemanly sleuth, unimportant murderees, irascible killer, workmanly plot, facile writing.	Agreeable —quite

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we have no formal way of getting them for review. Again, we are not always sure that we should try to review them. Evidently, our classification system cannot function automatically even for all technical papers of limited scope but we have various means that are adequate for this class of writing.

When we come to areas 2 and 3—more general articles either mostly technical or only slightly so—we run into more real difficulty. Our practice has changed with experience and can probably never be completely defined.

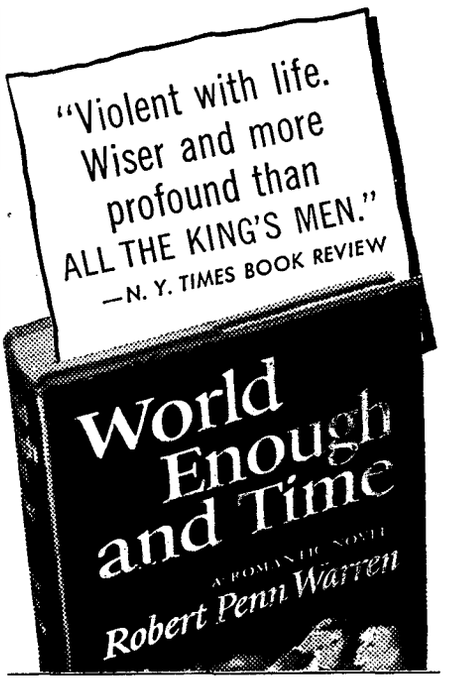
Let me take the most extreme case first. This would be the nontechnical parts of general articles written by authors who are not full-time employees of the Atomic Energy Commission or its contractors and whose present connection with the Atomic Energy Commission is not on a policy level. I have tried to make clear how fully we appreciate the evils of any limitation on freedom of speech. Here is an area where interference would clearly be unjustified except on project people for administrative reasons. We intend to avoid interference in this area. Should we trespass inadvertently we are sure that we will be quickly and properly called to account by the press and others who are sensitive to unwarranted Government interference.

Public discussion of political or moral questions arising from our development of atomic or hydrogen bombs is vital to wise decisions in such a democracy as ours. Criticism of the atomic-energy policies of the Congress or of the Executive or of the Commission itself is free and open as far as we are concerned. May I say that it is also frequent. We don't have time to read all the discussion on these questions that comes out but we do inevitably get enough direct criticism to prevent us from being complacent and to help us in doing our job as well as possible.

In the technical or scientific parts of such general articles experience has gradually brought us to a sharp differentiation in terms of authorship. We think it makes a lot of difference who writes an article. This is the assumption I made earlier and which becomes important here. At present we disregard almost entirely the speeches and writings of those who have had no access to classified information. We do this for two reasons. Not only do we wish to restrict our activities as much as possible but there is a security reason for not getting involved in the review of articles or speeches made by outsiders. We refuse to comment on such articles because in the process of comment in detail, of asking a man not to say this or that, we would reveal the very facts we should be holding. By specifying what should be taken out of speculative articles and talks we automatically underscore what information is classified and thereby reveal it to the authors who have had no previous access to classified information and presumably are not cleared to receive it. This is hard to follow at first, I know. When random guesses happen to hit correctly on real secrets it would appear that security is breached. This is not necessarily true so long as the reader does not know whether the guesser is right or not. Security is breached, however, if the Commission identifies those guesses which coincide with facts by insisting on their removal. As long as the Commission makes no comment on the speculations of people who do not have access to restricted data a spy will not have help from an official source in his problem of differentiating fact from fancy.

This is why there has been no hint of protest from the Atomic Energy Commission about most of the speculative articles which have been written about how a hydrogen bomb can be built, its probable effects, probable degree of success, or the rate of progress the United States has made in developing such a weapon. When these articles are written by people who have had no access to our confidential information we make no comment.

NOW we come to the twilight zone that is really hard to handle, the writings and speeches of people who have or have had access to classified data and are discussing topics related to our classified programs. We believe such men share with us the responsibility for seeing to it that no significant information is revealed. We hope they will realize that they themselves, the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authors of such articles, cannot always make a sound judgment on the significance of what they have written however well acquainted they are with certain phases of the project. Even if their information is extensive it cannot be as extensive as the collective knowledge available to the Commission and, in any case, they are acting as critics and editors of their own work.

Let me illustrate why we think it makes a difference who writes an article and why we think an individual author may underestimate the significance of what he says. I will give an exaggerated example to illustrate the point. Suppose I were to make the following statement in a speech: "I cannot tell you how many bombs we have but I might point out that Dr. X and General Y, both of whom were associated with the Manhattan District, have stated that by 1950 we would have so and so many bombs." This might be an entirely factual statement including only material already published. Yet for me, as a member of the Atomic Energy Commission, to make it would be a gross breach of security since it would be inevitably taken as an endorsement of the predictions of Dr. X and General Y.

We have reviewed many articles for periodical publication and a few books, and in each instance our requests for deletion of matter which we have found to be classified have been complied with even though there have been doubts expressed occasionally as to the accuracy of our judgment. This is the kind of voluntary cooperation that makes possible the day-to-day solution of our dilemma.

Occasionally an article by a scientist of standing in the project is not submitted to us but a copy reaches us by chance. The fact that the article has not been submitted does not seem to us to relieve us from responsibility for review. It merely makes the process more hurried and more painful for the author, the publisher, and ourselves.

We do not enjoy making these judgments. In terms of the dilemma I explained earlier the decision either way is bound to have some bad effects. All we can hope for is that the good effects are more significant. Each decision involves knowledge and foresight. We are keenly aware of the difficulties of these problems and all our approaches have been tentative. We have tried to be prudent but we have not always been right. We do have more relevant knowledge available to us than is available to other groups. We can only hope our foresight is good enough to use that knowledge wisely.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 853

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Opera by Mozart.	51 60 181 73 53 79 145 168 160 110
B. That which comes casually; an incidental advantage.	119 125 55 32 131 182 143 72 96 127 154
C. Behaved, functioned, etc., especially under particular circumstances.	140 41 173 121 178 28 45
D. Hungarian art patron whose private orchestra Haydn conducted from 1760-90.	132 36 25 162 128 43 93 100 166
E. Small monarchy in France, 15th and 16th centuries, subject of Béranger's famous song, 1813.	58 86 68 42 148 64
F. Verdi's last opera, based on a character from Shakespeare.	172 184 105 161 20 152 13 94
G. Inflammation of the matrix or folds of the nail, resulting in loss of the nail (med.).	31 80 185 158 67 34 169
H. Untanned cattle skin.	170 95 38 7 130 29 122
I. French composer, a leader of radical modern French school of music; pupil of Cesar Franck (1851-1931).	81 11 75 90 5
J. Member of an empire once the rival of Babylon and Egypt.	59 104 16 6 46 82 129
K. To ignore the claims of (U.S.).	65 2 165 149 12 106 159 138 146 21
L. English proprietor of famous Chocolate House in London, about 1697.	78 17 120 35 180
M. Furnished with prongs.	175 99 137 115 89

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Too shrill.	77 114 176 19 47 70 151 134 92 101 117 163
O. Irish political leader, founder of Sinn Fein, etc. (1872-1922).	10 54 111 147 126 24 66 108
P. A brown earth highly valued by artists as a permanent pigment.	141 57 156 1 116
Q. Strait connecting Long Island Sound and Upper New York Bay (2 wds.).	44 14 155 48 177 144 135 3 97
R. Father of Enos (Bib.).	62 91 30 83
S. "Hills" where Horace's villa was located, gift of Maecenas.	98 88 124 8 50 136
T. Judaeo-German.	85 153 123 102 39 167 103
U. Concord; unity.	118 142 18 9 63 69 174
V. Applied to New York State other than New York City, esp. at election time (comp.).	26 139 186 171 49 37 157
W. Anything small and contemptible (fig.).	15 61 112 150
X. First name, French poet of 18th century, in title of opera by Giordano.	22 76 183 4 33 109
Y. Any place or occasion of great mental or spiritual suffering (Bib. origin).	133 52 107 164 27 87 56 71 23 113
Z. Dam and reservoir for irrigation in Utah, built in 1930.	84 40 179 74

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

							1 P	2 K	3 Q	4 X	5 I	6 J	7 H	8 S	9 U	10 O		11 I
12 K		13 F	14 Q	15 W	16 J	17 L	18 U	19 N		20 F	21 K	22 X	23 Y		24 O	25 D		
	26 V	27 Y	28 C	29 H		30 R	31 G		32 B	33 X		34 G	35 L	36 D		37 V		
38 H	39 T	40 Z	41 C		42 E	43 D	44 Q		45 C	46 J	47 N	48 Q	49 V	50 S	51 A	52 Y		
	53 A	54 O	55 B	56 Y		57 P	58 E		59 J	60 A	61 W	62 R	63 U		64 E	65 K		
	66 O	67 G	68 E		69 U	70 N	71 Y	72 B	73 A	74 Z	75 I		76 X	77 N	78 L			
79 A	80 G	81 I		82 J	83 R	84 Z	85 T	86 E	87 Y		88 S	89 M	90 I	91 R	92 N			
93 D		94 F	95 H	96 B	97 Q	—	98 S	99 M	100 D	101 N	102 T		103 T	104 J	105 F	106 K		
	107 Y	108 O	109 X	110 A		111 O		112 W	113 Y	114 N	115 M	116 P		117 N	118 U	119 A		
120 L	121 C	122 H	123 T		124 S	125 A	126 O	127 B	128 D	129 J		130 H	131 B	132 D		133 Y		
134 N	135 Q	136 S	137 M		138 K	139 V		140 C	141 P	142 U	143 B	144 Q	145 A	146 K		147 O		
148 E	149 K		150 W	151 N	152 F	153 T	154 B	155 Q		156 P	157 V	158 G	159 K	160 A	161 F	162 D		
	163 N	164 Y	165 K	166 D		167 T	168 A	169 G	170 H	171 V		172 F	173 C	174 U	175 M	176 N		
177 Q		178 C	179 Z	180 L	181 A	182 B		183 X	184 F	185 G	186 V							

Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 26 of this issue.

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SRL / RECORDINGS SECTION

IMPRESSIONS

SOME hours of earnest soul searching have failed to resolve in my mind the problem presented by Dorothy Kirsten's collection of Gershwin songs noted in the POP REPORT on page 49 of this issue. Singers, very good ones, have been doing this sort of thing—or its equivalent—for more years than Kirsten has been alive, so she cannot be taxed with anything but endorsement of a standard practice. John McCormack, for example, was singing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" at me before I knew he could speak a word of German; and Caruso's record of "Over There" is more than an entry in a catalogue for many.

More recently Grace Moore, Eleanor Steber, Risë Stevens, and others have been singing the same sort of thing without raising more than an eyebrow on some of the loftier-browed critics. Steber's "Summertime," for example, is as beautiful a version of it as I know, and some of Stevens's Cole Porter songs are delightful. The difference is, however, that these people use the voices God gave them, and somebody painfully taught them how to use, whereas Kirsten could be another Helen Forrest or Doris Day or slightly louder Martha Tilton for all the evidence of a real voice there is on this disc.

My complaint, then, is not that Kirsten doesn't perform them well enough, or idiomatically, but that she sings them too well, with too much of the popular vocalist's peculiar art. If that is perverse, consider this further fact. It takes time, if not much voice, to learn to sing this way. Those who think a Dinah Shore or Mildred Bailey merely walked up to a microphone one morning and began making top records should inquire sometime how many years they spent in obscurity learning secrets of voice control, inflection, and rhythmic phrasing, all of which sound so natural and spontaneous on their discs. How much time *can* Kirsten spare from her study of repertory, languages, dramatic action, enunciation, posture, gesture, etc., as required by her operatic career, for this kind of probably profitable but essentially trivial pursuit? (Trivial, that is, for one of her gifts.) My feeling when next I hear her as Mimi, Butterfly, Manon Lescaut, or Marguerite is likely to be—not nearly as much as she has given to it.

—IRVING KOLODIN,
MUSIC EDITOR.

AUGUST 1950

ARTICLES

Folk Music, the Roots of Jazz	CHARLES EDWARD SMITH	35
Italian Rebels to the Fore	JOHN P. MCKNIGHT	37
Berlin Carries On	EVERETT HELM	38
"Fidelio" Without Fidelity	IRVING KOLODIN	39
Le Gout Houstonien	ROLAND GELATT	41
Speaking of Trends	MIKE LISBON	43

REVIEWS

Donizetti: "Il Campanello" (Simonetto) Mozart: "Don Giovanni" Arias (Welitch) Strauss: "Ein Heldenleben" (Beecham) Gershwin: "An American in Paris" (Bernstein) Verdi: "Tu che la vanita," etc. (Ellabelle Davis) Grieg: "Holberg Suite" (Neel) Dvorak: Waltzes (Jeremias) Borodin: "Prince Igor" Dances (Stokowski) Chabrier: "Menuet Pompeux," etc. (Stravinsky)	IRVING KOLODIN	40

DEPARTMENTS

RECORDINGS Reports: Classical LP's and Albums		42
The Other Side	THOMAS HEINITZ	44
Some Highs and Lows	EDWARD TATNALL CANBY	46
Hits and Misses	WILDER HOBSON	48
RECORDINGS Reports on Popular Releases		49
Letters to the RECORDINGS Editor		51

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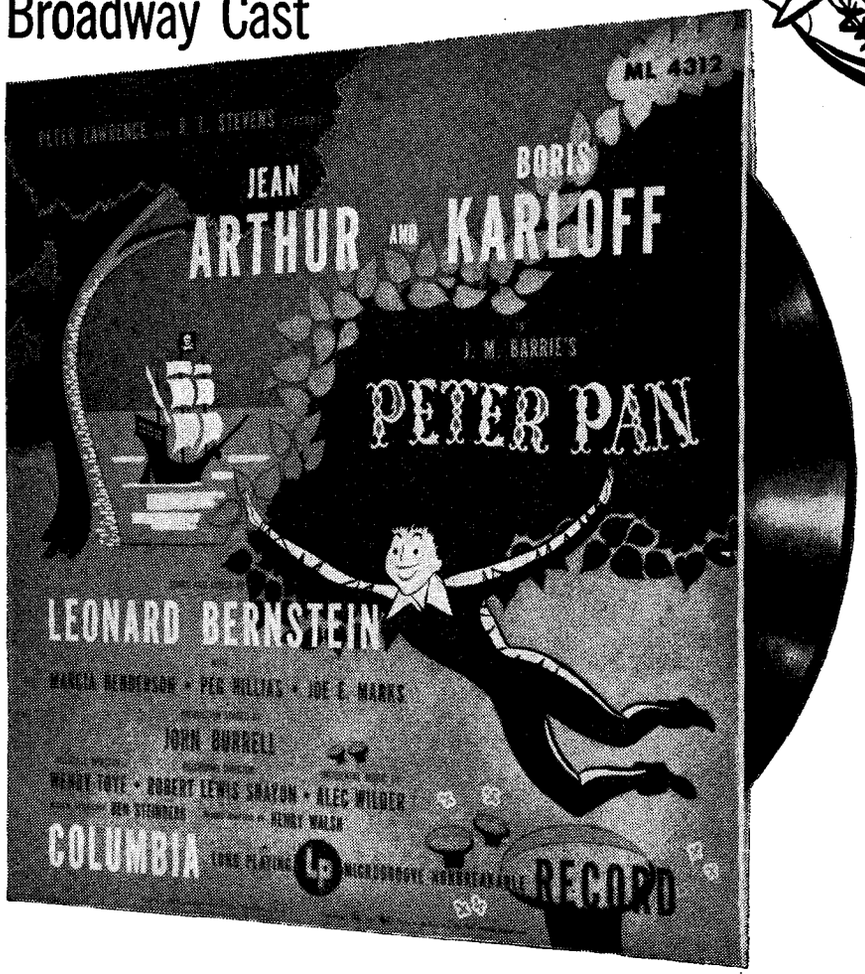

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Folk Music, the Roots of Jazz

CHARLES EDWARD SMITH

THIS was 1950, but the place was rural Alabama, the people American Negroes. Here, on a trip of exploration, aided by the Viking Fund, anthropologist Harold Courlander recently came upon a body of folk music surprisingly free of outside influence, containing in itself the basic elements of much that has long since passed into the main stream of American music. An expression of people to some extent at least still culturally isolated, it was in many respects a living documentation of traditional folk styles in which African traits are clearly discernible. As preserved by Courlander the results are now available for our pleasure and instruction. ("Negro Folk Music of Alabama," Ethnic Folkways Library, Vols. 1417, 1418, $7.33 each; also on LP, $5.95 each. 117 W. 46th St., N. Y. C. Notes by Harold Courlander and Ruby Pickens Tartt.)

In considering these discs it is well to remember that in the development of folk music cultural rather than chronological considerations are dominant. Oral folk styles survive better in areas that are backward, where much that is traditional co-exists with poverty and prisons. One need not insist that such conditions are essential—they are nevertheless a commonplace of folk development.

Until quite recently, Afro-American trends in our folk heritage were poorly documented, not seen in their proper perspective. A new and more intelligent approach was vastly aided by John and Alan Lomax in their hundreds of field recordings for the Library of Congress. Inscribed in durable form, one could learn from them the savage thrust that gave rhythmic impact to a cane-cutting song from the Brazos Bottoms of Texas, or the pathos of a field "holler" from Alabama. It became ever more evident that American Negro folk music had distinctive patterns and styles, at core African but shaped by its Anglo-

Saxon environment. In concentrating on content and style, rather than performance, Courlander's enterprise has done a remarkable job of clarifying this process.

Henry E. Krehbiel, once music critic of the *New York Tribune* and author of an enduring book on American folk music as well as more conventional studies of Wagner, opera, etc., made this distinction between folk and popular music. Folk music is created *by* the people, popular music *for* the people. Perhaps he would find the problem more complex today, when folk singers appeal to audiences far removed from their native environment. But always in the growth of folk music there have been individual creators who struck out beyond the confines of their places of origin to influence a wider audience than the immediate one. We may count it a fortunate development that a general understanding has developed to the point where the need to change an authentic singing style to accommodate alien ears is no longer necessary; we "foreigners," so to speak, have become so catholic in our tastes that we are able to take it in stride.

Big Bill Bronzy, who was introduced by John Hammond to a New York audience at a "Spirituals to Swing" concert in the early Forties, was such a singer. Standing awkwardly on the stage of Carnegie Hall, hands gnarled from work in the fields as well as playing the guitar, he complained of the store-bought shoes. But when he sang "I got the key to the highway an' I'm billed out an' boun' to go," many were struck by the likeness, in this rural product, to the urban blues, considered the basic jazz antecedent.

In Courlander's collection the companion may be found in a field blues, with its "Ah-hmm" interpolations common to work songs, as accentuation of the functional rhythm. Rich Amerson is the singer, described by his sister as little more than "breath and breeches." "But," she adds, "he sure can sing." He sure can. His "Black Woman," in which he makes a false start waiting for the recorder's signal to begin, is altogether as engaging as the fumble itself. It is, in sum, one of the finest of recorded blues, indoors or out, rural or urban. Sung without accompaniment, the moaning lines are punctuated by expressive phrases in falsetto—a practice quite common in rural blues but not often found in the urban variety. Infinitesimal shadings of tone and rhythmic accent build, within a single tempo, a suspense such as only the greatest blues singers achieve.

A BRIEF thirty years ago most of us would have despaired of ever coming across Negro spirituals not "watered down" for the Chautauqua trade. And no wonder. The country had been treated to this kind of thing ever since post-Emancipation days, as traveling singing groups raised money for Negro colleges. They utilized a repertory of spirituals adapted to Western European musical tradition, with a sin-

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Rich Amerson and Earthy Anne Coleman—"music *by* the people."

ful Juba dance thrown in for good measure. By and large such interpretations represented an imitation of the dominant, that is to say "white," culture, though the basic material was the creation of the American Negro.

Concurrently, a significant factor affecting the development of Negro folk traditions was the economically motivated, often ruthless, stamping out of tribal speech and customs. Whereas in the West Indies tribal rites and language were allowed to survive in one form or another, in the plantation country of the South they were all but eliminated in the drive to "civilize" and subjugate the slave population. Hence, the impact of Christianity, of the English language, and of Anglo-Saxon songs was felt from the start and such tribal survivals as good luck charms and "conjurin'" had little more significance than the squirrels' tails and rabbits' feet favored by truck drivers and boy cyclists.

In his examples of religious and secular music Courlander manages at the same time to give us a rounded picture of the whole environment, from children's songs to sermons, from field calls to blues. Although made in the current year, they probably afford as authentic a sampling as we'll get of the root music that fed into the melodic and rhythmic style of jazz which had its genesis sometime between Emancipation and 1900 (so that, in fact, by 1890 it had arrived at a definite style and instrumentation). That jazz developed as a narrowly regional music, local to New Orleans particularly, may now be accepted as historical fact. But the generating force in jazz was a Negro way of playing, a blues style that achieved rhythmic and tonal subtlety within quite simple forms. It is this blues style, this core of jazz style, that derives from Negro folk music, so that the polyphony of a religious Prayer (1488A) has its counterpart in that of an early Armstrong ensemble.

In his notes Courlander acutely singles out the African elements, summing up this part of the text by stating:

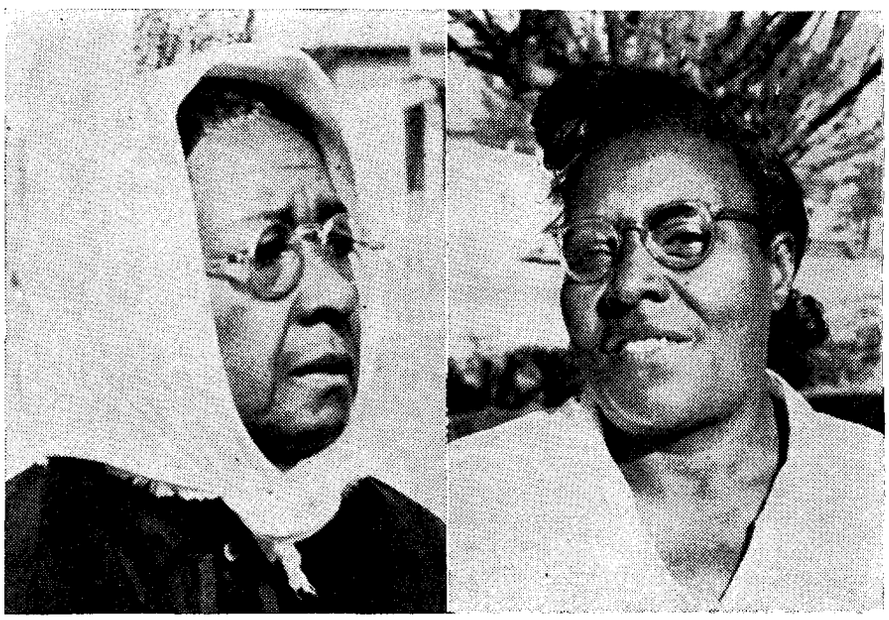
> The itemization of surviving non-European traits in American Negro singing is not intended to create the impression that this music is "African," however. A number of the songs that may be heard in Negro communities are delivered in an English style of some antiquity, and appear to be completely outside the realm of what is sometimes called "Afro-American" music. . . . The notation of African atavisms is intended only to point out the complicated and composite nature of American Negro music.

Closely integrated with the everyday life of the people, this music has about it the homely dignity of the commonplace, with moments of elemental greatness. The general performance level is remarkably high, and what little is lost at other moments is more than replaced by richness of style and content.

There are examples of repetitive, response songs both by children ("Satisfied" and "See, See, Rider") and by adults in such numbers as the primitive spiritual "Rock, Chair, I Told You to Rock," the children's "Satisfied," a ring-game song, being particularly vigorous and containing elements of not-too-gentle ridicule. The widely familiar ring-game song "Little Sally Walker" is given a lively, if brief, interpretation. There is a Br'er Rabbit story told with rich humor and a sermon by the Rev. E. D. Tuckey, of Bogue Chitto, on Abraham and Lot that suggests that sermons, like songs, are improvised until they arrive at a more or less set form. Another sermon, "Jonah," is told and sung with intensity by Rich Amerson and Earthy Anne Coleman. In this version Jonah gets himself a truck and helps stevedores load cotton. This is more naive than incongruous. A quality of folk spirituals has always been an ease of identification, Biblical lore to Southern environment. One of the most beautiful folk spirituals on record is Dock Reed's "Trampin'," a song of thoughtful rhythms and sensitive graduations of tone. (This spiritual is available in a fine concert interpretation by Marian Anderson, RCA Victor 1896.)

One might think that field calls and children's calls would have a merely academic interest, but like so much

(*Continued on page* 48)



Annie Grace Horn Dodson and Vera Hall Ward—"a spring feeding jazz."

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Italian Rebels to the Fore

CORELLI: *Concerti Grossi, Op. 6, Nos. 2 and 3; Sonata da camera, Op. 1, No. 9. Henry Swoboda conducting the Concert Hall String Orchestra.* (Concert Hall LP 29, $4.85.)

VIVALDI: *Concerto Grosso in D; Symphonies in F and C. Henry Swoboda conducting the Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra; George Ales, violinist.* (Concert Hall LP D1, limited edition.)

VIVALDI: *Violin Concerti in E flat major and G minor. Peter Rybar, violin, with Rudolf Moralt conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.* (Westminster LP 50-6, $5.95.)

VIVALDI: *Concerti in G minor (F. XII No. 3: "For the Dresden Orchestra") and D minor (F. 1 No. 11: "Senza Cantin"). Louis Kaufman, violin, with Roger Désormière conducting the Orchestra Symphonique Nationale, Paris.* (Capitol-Telefunken 45 rpm album 8076, $3.35; 78 rpm, $5.)

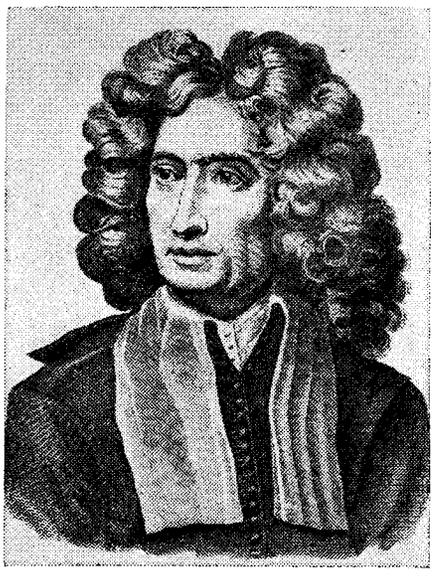
BOCCHERINI: *Concerto in D for flute and strings. Paul Renzi, flutist, with Gothic String Ensemble;* MARCELLO: *Concerto in C minor for oboe and strings. Paolo Renzi*, oboist, with Gothic String Ensemble.* (Concert Hall LP 50, $4.85.)

BOCCHERINI: *String Quartets No. 4 in D minor and No. 7 in G minor. The Guilet String Quartet.* (Concert Hall LP 43, $4.85.)

BOCCHERINI: *Symphony in A major. Henry Swoboda conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra;* HAYDN: *Octet in F major. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group.* (Westminster LP 50-2, $5.95.)

AS SMALL fry may safely skate upon ice too thin to bear their hefty elders, so the little fellows of the recording business often venture where the Titans fear to tread. Huge overhead and high-priced performers limit the big companies, usually, to established classics with large sales potentials; the newcomers must pick and choose among the music left over. But, in the large view, this is all to the good, since many gaping lacunae in the catalogues are thereby filled.

Of this spate of elegant baroque stuff descending upon us from Concert Hall, Westminster, and Capitol-Telefunken, much is new to discs. Of the few selections previously recorded, most are badly dated. So to the three companies my hearty felicitations for shrewdly picking their spots. And to the records themselves, my heartfelt *benvenuti*.



—*Bettmann Archive.*

Vivaldi and Corelli—"music of verve and imagination."

Indeed, I am sorely puzzled that the big companies have so long neglected this meritorious music of the Italian rebels against the *stile antico* of the Renaissance. Surely we are no small coterie, we who revel in Corelli, the Scarlattis, Vivaldi, Pergolesi, Boccherini, and the others of that great era. Surely ours is no esoteric, cabalistic cult. For much of this music is timeless, fresh as the day it was written two or three centuries ago: music of verve and imagination and high spirits—grand of conception, stout of construction, winsome of melody, often ingenious, sometimes daring of harmony.

Moreover, here are the lineal ancestors of Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms; here are men who, if due account be given the benefits accruing to later composers from improvement of instruments and the advance of virtuosity, are well worthy to stand alongside those giants. Here are the true fathers of the modern symphony, concerto, chamber music. Here, finally, are the composer-performers who revolutionized violin techniques, gave the instrument respectability, and made it the keystone of the orchestra. The line runs straight from Corelli and Vivaldi through Somis, Tartini, and Paganini to the virtuosos of today.

Yet of their tremendous output—Vivaldi and Boccherini, especially, were of Mozartian fecundity—we have had, until quite recently, little or nothing on records; and most of that comes to us from abroad, where Molinari's and Malipiero's devoted efforts to rescue the "Red Priest" from obscurity have reawakened interest in his entire period.

When I was very young I inquired of my sister why her piano teacher gave her so much Bach. She told me, "Because Bach is so good to exercise the fingers." For years after that I took no pleasure in Bach: I heard in him only digital gymnastics for perspiring young pianists. Perhaps something like that has been our trouble with the baroque Italians. Perhaps we have been so often assured of their historical importance that we have shied away from their actual music, sure that it must be dry as dust. To all such fearful ones, these records are recommended.

The recordings themselves are, in the main, unexceptionable. Surface noise is almost nil. For the most part the *concertatori* have resisted the temptation to embellish unduly, à la Stokowski, the original arrangements. Désormière, in fact, has used the exact instrumentation called for in the original Vivaldi manuscripts in the Turin library. With rare deviations conductors and soloists respect the mood and the tempi of the works. I am especially grateful to Messrs. Ales, Rybar, and Kaufman, the solo violinists, for sedulous avoidance of the excessive rubato that often marks and mars the interpretation of more famous fiddlers. And the engineers cooperate nicely—although ears sensitive to high frequencies may want some treble control to soften Rybar's harshness.

The music, of course, is not all of an equal excellence. Vivaldi enthusiast

(*Continued on page* 47)

**A recording company that will put Paul Renzi, flutist, and Paolo Renzi, oboist, on the same disc must bear the onus of footnotes like this. There are, indeed, two of them—and, it appears, no kin.*

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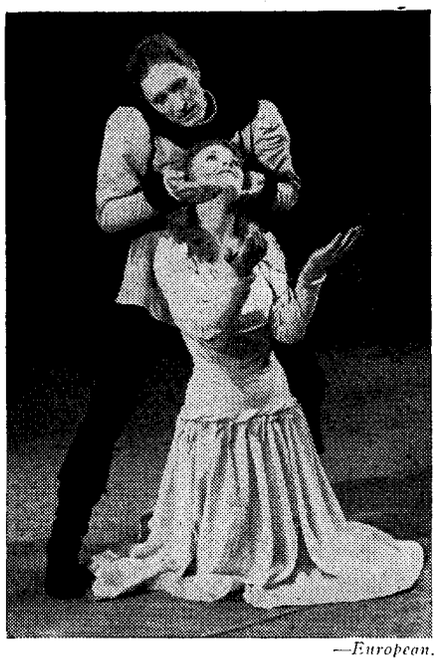
Berlin Carries On

EVERETT HELM

THERE is no artistic blockade in Berlin—not yet at least. There is also very little artistic cooperation between West and East, which meet squarely at the Brandenburger Tor, but things proceed on a live-and-let-live basis. Actors still can appear one night in an East Sector theatre *chez les Russes* and the following in the West Sector *bei den Amis*, as the Americans are semiaffectionately called. One of Berlin's leading actresses, Maria Schanda, is currently doing just that—appearing in Schiller's "Wallenstein" in the Schlosspark Theatre (American Sector) and in Gorki's "Wassa Schelesnowa" in the Kammerspiele (Russian Sector). In music the situation is much the same. Joseph Keilberth, conductor in Dresden (Russian Zone) and in the Berlin Staatsoper (Russian Sector), and incidentally one of the best conductors in Europe today, makes frequent guest appearances in the West Sector of Berlin and recently completed a highly successful tour of the West Zones. Such artists as Menuhin, Ralph Kirkpatrick, Otto Klemperer, John Bitter, and Margot Pinter have appeared in the Russian Sector and Zone.

All of which goes to show, perhaps, that art is, or at least can be, superpolitical and apolitical and can serve as a bridge for international understanding. When political tensions were at a peak in Berlin (during the blockade) the only branch of human endeavor not directly affected was the artistic.



—*European.*

Werner Egk's "Abraxas" — "an outspokenly sexual" Faust legend.

It is devoutly to be hoped that the present, comparatively neutral, situation in Berlin will not worsen, for it explains in part why the artistic life of this city is more intense and in many ways more interesting than that of any other European capital. Here are five nationalities thrown together officially, each anxious to display and promote its own culture: the British, the French, the Americans, the Russians, and—let us not forget it—the Germans. It is natural that each power pushes its own cultural products. In the Russian Sector (Staatsoper, Komische Oper, Kammerspiele, Deutsches Theatre) one sees and hears "Boris Godounoff," "Bride of the Czar," Russian concert music, and Russian theatre. On the NWDR (British-controlled radio) one hears the music of Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten. So long as such competition is kept on a purely artistic basis, as it has been by and large, the result is exciting and only makes things more interesting.

The artistic atmosphere of Berlin is bound up as well with "general conditions," and the public's reaction thereto. Berlin is not a very happy place, materially speaking. The city itself has almost disappeared; nothing remains but rubble and a few scattered buildings. Life is extremely difficult for the average Berliner, for all indeed except a few industrialists and black marketeers. Money is scarce, prices are high, incidents are frequent —incidents which carry with them the threat of serious consequences. For many Berliners, therefore, art and intellectual activity represent an outlet and a solace. In this island city, surrounded on all sides by the Russian Zone, the population finds its compensations in concerts, opera, theatre. It is as if a large part of the people's energies were thwarted and were as a result diverted towards things of the mind and spirit.

Despite the present harrowing situation Berlin remains Berlin and Berliners remain Berliners, as apart from the rest of Germany as New York from other American cities, Paris from the provinces, or London from the rest of England. There remains in Berlin a residue of the tradition which made the city what it was in pre-Hitler times. Even in ruins, Berlin is still a metropolis with a metropolitan outlook. All that happened there in the "golden years" before 1933 has left its impression, and not even the consistent standard-lowering and artistic eyewash of the Nazis have erased it. The Berliner, too, has retained certain qualities which set him apart from his compatriots. He has less to be thankful for than the Germans outside of Berlin: unemployment is greater, money is scarcer, the Russians are at his doorstep. But he grumbles little, takes great pride in the way Berlin has held out and is still holding out under difficult circumstances, is a better democrat than his brethren in the provinces. The way in which Western Berlin took the blockade "on the chin" and made the best of it is typical of this extraordinary spirit.

A CURIOUS factor in the life of Berlin, and one which affects theatrical and musical life directly, is the existence of two currencies, the west mark and the east mark. Although theoretically both currencies have the same value, in reality one west mark is worth over seven east marks. But the price of concert and theatre tickets in marks is not much greater in the East Sector than in Western Berlin. This situation results in a decided advantage to cultural events in the Russian Sector. For example, the best seat in the Staatsoper costs twenty east marks—less than three west marks (equivalent to around seventy cents). However, an equally good seat in the Städtische Oper (British Sector) costs twelve west marks (nearly three dollars). An average person earning west marks must think a long time before buying a ticket in the West Sector, but if he changes his money into east marks, he can go to four performances for the same amount.

I recently talked with a man sixty years old, who can only be described as "cultured"—the kind of German who finds his greatest pleasure in going to the opera or theatre. Before Hitler he had been a very wealthy manufacturer, who in the normal course of events would never have had any great financial worries. After 1933 he was a confirmed anti-Nazi, and that with good reason: because he had a grandmother who was part Jewish he was kicked out of his firm by the Hitler regime. That, however, was by no means the end of his troubles; when the war was over and the Russians occupied Berlin they burned his house, which was about all he had left, to the ground. He now tries to get along as a real-estate broker, eats once a week in a restaurant, eats the rest of the time in his furnished room, where he "cooks" for himself, and goes very rarely to the theatre. When he does go, however, he goes in the East Sector—not through

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preference, necessarily, but because he couldn't even contemplate paying for a ticket in the West Sector.

Five symphony orchestras play regular subscription series in Berlin: the Berlin Philharmonic, the Staatskapelle (orchestra of the Staatsoper), the radio orchestras of RIAS (American-controlled) and the Berliner Rundfunk (Russian-controlled), and the orchestra of the Komische Oper. The Berlin Philharmonic, with its glorious tradition, remains in a class by itself. The RIAS orchestra in its present expanded form is scarcely a year old and has not yet acquired the discipline and ensemble of an older orchestra. These two orchestras play many public concerts: the Philharmonic weekly and RIAS on the average of every ten days, each program being given twice. There is considerable rivalry between them and between their conductors — the Rumanian Sergiu Celibidache of the Philharmonic and the Hungarian Ferenc Fricsay of RIAS.

Three opera houses do an excellent business: the Städtische Oper (Municipal Opera) in the British Sector and the Staatsoper and Komische Oper, both in the Russian Sector. Productions are not uniformly good and are far from approaching prewar artistic levels, but one must take into consideration that not one of the great Berlin opera houses survived the war, and the present houses are makeshifts. One of the principal needs at the moment is for new, fresh voices with adequate training.

Many of the most interesting performances take place in the Staatsoper; not only is the quality of the productions normally high, but also the repertory includes a fair proportion of Russian operas which are in Western Europe infrequently given: "Eugen Onegin," "Sadko," "Bride of the Czar," "Boris Godounoff," the ballets "Dornöschen," by Tchaikovsky, and "Romeo and Juliet," by Prokofiev. The big success of the year, however, is the Städtische Oper's production of contemporary German composer Werner Egk's ballet "Abraxas." This evening-long work, written after a ballet scenario by Heine, deals with the Faust legend in what only can be described as an outspokenly sexual way. The score is well suited to the needs of the dancing, and the choreography by Janine Charrat of the Paris Ballet des Champs Elysées is excellent. The work got off to a splendid start in the fall, when Charrat herself danced, superbly, in the premiere. By the end of the season "Abraxas," which was banned (before the Berlin performance) by the city fathers of Munich as being immoral, will have had some fifty performances.

"Fidelio" Without Fidelity

AS ONE of those who consider Beethoven's "Fidelio" as great a musical experience as an opera house can provide, the mere fact that all of it can now be heard once, twice, or as many more times as the listener cares to indulge himself is an event of the first magnitude. The agency is a new label called Oceanic, the means three LP discs in an issue numbered OCLP 301, priced at $18.50. But even such an arch-enthusiast as I must confess that it adds to a prime instance of diminishing returns: the first hearing much more pleasurable than the second, the third appreciably less than the second. About the fifth playing one wonders whether it is worth even a qualified recommendation.

The cast, as such, is not too bad. Only one of the persons involved has an international reputation, and that is Margarete Bäumer, as shrill and worn a voice for "Abscheulicher" as one would want *not* to hear. (She was a visitor to New York in 1931, for those who are interested.) The others range from fair to excellent, with Heinz Sauerbaum, the Florestan, as suitable a voice for his music as one knows about today (assuming that Roswaenge is no longer the man he was when Bäumer was the woman she was).

The blight of the enterprise (aside from inept microphone work) is the conductor, Gerhard Pfluger. His name means little to me, and his direction doesn't make one yearn for greater acquaintance. Prevailingly, it is slow and without animating imagination, in a respectable *kapellmeister* spirit, which may suffice for the Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk (of which he is the musical director) but not for a "Fidelio" to be played and replayed. Thus, such glories of musical inspiration as the "Canon" quartet, "Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin?," the prisoner's chorus, and the magnificent dungeon scene go their way rather demurely, by the standards of the eloquence they contain.

On the dramatic side the undertaking is fouled by an unnatural relation of the speaking voices to the music which precedes and follows. I may be merely guessing at the process employed, but I have an impression that the spoken recitative was recorded separately (after all, it is not susceptible to wrong notes or false entrances), then dubbed into the continuous musical sequence. I have no prejudice against the method—assuming that it was used—only against the results. The dialogue is all close-up, and very clear; the solos and ensembles at a greater distance, relatively out of listening focus.

Margarete Bäumer—"it adds to a prime instance of diminishing returns."

Oceanic has a point in stating that this is not a dubbing from a radio broadcast (in the manner, not mentioned, of the recent Mercury "Fliegende Holländer") but the difference is one of degree, not of kind. Conceivably, one would prefer a dubbing of Toscanini's broadcast of "Fidelio" to the best studio job Pfluger could accomplish with Flagstad, Svanholm, Schoeffler, and Ljuba Welitch (as Marzelline). There are no obvious *gaucheries* in this "Fidelio" as there are in the Mercury "Fliegende Holländer"; rather, a pedestrian concept, not too well reproduced.

Aside from the faults of balance previously noted, the recording is characterized by rather shrill highs, a lack of warmth in the sound (at any time), and what may be called a mere subsistence level of quality at the very best. I am all for enterprise and sensible additions to the recorded literature—in both of which respects Oceanic has earned the record-buyer's esteem—but the exploitation of an opportunity carries with it a certain responsibility in quality. That responsibility has not been met in this instance.

Other than those mentioned, the cast includes Theodor Horrand (Minister of Justice), Manfred Hubner (Pizzaro), Adolf Savelkouls (Rocco), Ursula Engert (a charming Marzelline), and Aloys Kuhnert (Jaquino). The "Fidelio" overture is heard at the beginning. —THE EDITOR.

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Recordings in Review

A Buffa by Donizetti

DONIZETTI: *"Il Campanello." Alfredo Simonetto conducting the EIAR orchestra, with Sesto Bruscantini, Clara Scarangella, and Renato Capecchi, chorus, etc.* (Cetra-Soria LP 50,027, $5.95.)

Have you ever heard the one about the elderly apothecary who married a sprightly young bride, thus spiting her cousin and erstwhile suitor? A local law compels the apothecary to answer his night bell — "Il Campanello"—wedding night or not; and the jilted suitor takes his night-long revenge in a variety of guises, each requiring emergency treatment.

If this sounds more like Minsky than the Metropolitan the blame is not mine but Donizetti's, who undertook to set this French vaudeville sketch in a week's time to help out a Neapolitan impresario. There are plentiful traces of both Rossini and Mozart in the writing, but also an ample amount of the gaiety, freshness, and ingenuity for which the Donizetti of "L'Elisir d'Amore," "Don Pasquale," and "La Fille du Regiment"—not to mention "Lucia di Lammermoor"—is celebrated. The irritating fly in the otherwise bland ointment is the inordinate amount of recitative; however, the Cetra-Soria album (one LP) includes both Italian and English text to provide education where entertainment is in abeyance.

Simonetto provides the kind of spirited direction required, and though none of the singers is exceptional, all—especially Capecchi, who plays the discarded suitor—are qualified. Scarangella has a wiry voice but plentiful spirit, and Bruscantini, as the Apothecary, suggests a junior Baccaloni. Clear, well-balanced recording, perhaps more faithful than desirable where the anachronistically modern piano *continuo* is heard.

Donna Anna by Welitch

MOZART: *"Or sai, chi l'onore" and "Non mi dir" from "Don Giovanni." Ljuba Welitch, soprano, with orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. Also six songs, with accompaniment by Paul Ulanowsky, piano.* (Columbia LP 2118, $3.85.)

The moot question of Ljuba Welitch's suitability for Mozart, specifically Donna Anna in "Don Giovanni," is herewith submitted by Columbia to the approval of a larger audience than heard her last winter at the Metropolitan with the issue of the two principal arias for that character. So far as this juror is concerned, the evidence for Welitch is stronger for *and* against than the actual performance.

Of her intelligent apprehension of the dramatic and musical content of the two episodes there can be no question, nor of her completely conscious exposition of them. However, the tone throughout is knife-sharp and, what is more damaging, without variation of color or intensity. Much of the technical detail is artfully managed, and always on a high plane of responsibility to Mozart, up to the accelerated *cabaletta* for "Non mi dir," which, even at a considerate pace, is lacking the required ease in florid execution. Alessio de Paolis provides the voice of Don Ottavio before "Or sai, chi l'onore," Reiner conducts incisively, and the recording is as good as any Columbia has achieved in this country.

On the overside of the ten-inch LP Welitch gives a more varied survey of her vocal resources in songs by Dargomijsky ("I Grieve" and "The Miller"), Moussorgsky ("Star, Tell Me"), Marx ("Hat dich die Liebe berurht" and "Valse de Chopin"), and Strauss ("Die Nacht" and "Cäcilie"). She is not the unerring mistress of such matter that she may become after two or three American concert tours, but she has an undoubted flair for the idiom, and a rare command of vocal nuance, *though not* of color. Now, if she could do the same for Donna Anna. . . . The highly adept pianist is Lotte Lehmann's Ulanowsky. Excellent recording.

More RCA LP's

STRAUSS: *"Ein Heldenleben." Sir Thomas Beecham conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LP 1059, $5.45.)

GERSHWIN: *"An American in Paris." Leonard Bernstein conducting the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra. Also excerpts from Copland's "Billy the Kid."* (RCA Victor LP 1031, $4.85.)

The resourcefulness and skill of RCA Victor's technicians in solving mechanical problems—given a free hand—are brilliantly evident in these two new LP's, among the best the listening dog has sat on to date. The "Heldenleben" is noted with particular pleasure, since it presents the more difficult problem of a nontape original. The outcome, certainly, is superior to any previous adaptation of a Beecham performance, either on 45 or 33, with a sharpness of detail, a richness of texture surprisingly close to the 78 rpm original. Heard thus consecutively, the intrinsic subtlety and refinement of Beecham's conception are more absorbing than ever—not to mention the remarkable virtuosity of the orchestra itself.

Bernstein's treatment of Gershwin was perhaps a lesser feat in sound alchemy (tape was an ally from the start), but the performance itself grows in magnitude with rehearing. The conductor possesses not only a brilliantly suitable understanding of the whole mood and temper of the piece, but a clarifying feeling for its less than crystalline texture which, I only deplore, the composer himself never had a chance to hear. He makes all its suggestions palpable, all its striving plain. This is definitive Gershwin, both in letter and spirit. The better realized Copland score is a lesser problem for Bernstein, though the outcome is of like service to the composer. This side, made in the Tanglewood Concert Hall, is a good deal leaner and less resonant than the other.

La Belle Davis

VERDI: *"Tu che la vanita conoscesti del mondo" ("Don Carlos"), etc. Ellabelle Davis, soprano, with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite.* (London LP 181, $4.85.)

Being a Negro singer of quality in the United States is the nearest thing to a prophet without honor in his own land that I can think of. Save for Dorothy Maynor, most fine singers of her race (Anderson, Hayes, even Robeson) were not taken seriously in this land until they had had substantial successes abroad. Latest instance is the vastly gifted Ellabelle Davis, who has had some engagements with native symphony orchestras but no chance yet to work in the field of opera, which, this disc shows, is her true metier.

Both in the Verdi air noted above and the remarkably beautiful "Ebben? ne andro lontana," from Catalani's "La Wally," Miss Davis sings with a blend of vocal quality and emotional fervor not heard from a native soprano since the fabled Ponselle. Those who have not heard it may imagine a sound of limpid purity, equal to Maynor's at its best, but with a tenderness, warmth, and flexibility of statement

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all its own. One may say with certainty that whoever the Elizabeth of the Metropolitan's "Don Carlos" may be in next winter's revival, she won't sing this air with equal depth of feeling or perfection of detail.

On the other side of the ten-inch disc containing the two opera excerpts Miss Davis is much less successful with a group of German lieder (Schubert's "Wanderers Nachtlied," "Lachen und Weinen," and "Wohin?," and Strauss's "Allerseelen" and "Befreit"). The voice is no less remarkable, but the manner is much more cautious, the results a good deal less expressive. At that, her German enunciation is Hayes-like in clarity. Hubert Greenslade is the pianist.

On another ten-inch London LP (LPS 182, $4.85) Miss Davis sings nine spirituals with more of the lovely sound she commands but with a degree of refinement that makes them sound more like art songs than folk expressions. Generally, too, they are overarranged, especially the four she sings with orchestra directed by Victor Olof. However, the mood of "Were You There?" is wonderfully conveyed.

Sweetness, and Light

GRIEG: *"Holberg Suite." Boyd Neel and his string orchestra.* (London LP 173, $4.85.)

DVORAK: *Waltzes, Opus* 54. *Czech Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Otakar Jeremias.* (Mercury LP 10030, $4.85.)

Much more welcome than another Brahms No. 3 or Tchaikovsky No. 4—which will come whether we want them or not—are these delightful footnotes to the expectable repertory works of Grieg and Dvorak. There has not been a representative "Holberg Suite" since Walter Goehr's prewar issue with the London String Or-

(*Continued on page* 50)

Boyd Neel—"a special luster and clarity."

Le Gout Houstonien

I RETURN from France to find on my desk five new LP's of French music. It is a rewarding homecoming. My eye is caught immediately by Erik Satie's "Parade" (Columbia LP 2112, $3.85). It is the first time a major orchestral work by this composer has found its way on record, and it issues from deep in the heart of Texas. Satie, who savored droll paradox, would have enjoyed the spectacle of Houston putting Paris to shame. But will Paris know it? Though Texas must be well represented on the Marshall Plan with oil and agricultural products, I doubt whether provision has been made for Satie. A pity. Washington could do much worse in the current ideological struggle than to export this instance of American cultural initiative.

"Parade," played by the Houston Symphony under Efrem Kurtz, was commissioned by Diaghilev thirty-three years ago, yet its quality is so fresh and up to date that it might have been commissioned by Martha Graham thirty-three days ago. The work overflows with foretastes of things to come. I speak not of the obvious link with Les Six but of an influence further afield and less heralded. The Prokofiev of "Peter and the Wolf" is clearly discernible here, also Gershwin ("An American in Paris") and Copland ("El Sálon México"). Having remarked on its seminal character and noted the crystal limpidity, the hearty melodic expression of Satie's writing, I must go on to confess that the disc leaves me somewhat unsatisfied. It is doubtless a failing, but ballet music *in vacuo* seldom gives this listener much pleasure. To me it resembles a concerto without the soloist. Auric's music to the ballet "Les Matelots," on the LP's reverse side, suffers from a like handicap.

Those who enjoy Renaissance music flavored for modern tastes in the manner of Warlock's "Capriol Suite" or Canteloube's "Chants d'Auvergne" should be much taken with Poulenc's "Suite Française" as interpreted by Jean Germain (Mercury LP 15007, $3.85). There is no pleasing a composer. M. Poulenc has registered public disapproval of a preponderantly laudatory article appearing in these pages a few months ago ("A Vote for Francis Poulenc," RECORDINGS, February). So I am prepared for the worst when I say that charming and buoyant as this music may be it falls short of Poulenc's vocal attainments. Couperin's Concert No. 6 in B flat occupies the other side. Though it may be indifferent Couperin, I incline to the view that it is indifferent playing (by a chamber orchestra under Fernand Oubradous). In any event, I miss the wit and nobility evident when Wanda Landowska addresses herself to this composer. Another Mercury presents Ravel's Sonatine in a performance by Germaine Leroux (LP 15006, $3.85). Miss Leroux knows the value of a significant pause and possesses the happy ability of imparting breadth to a musical phrase. Her interpretation may not eclipse the Cortot of fond memory, but it is certainly the best of modern vintage. On the reverse an Italian ensemble plays Ravel's "Introduction and Allegro." Could the music have worn so completely threadbare? Or is the disjointed, prosaic performance to blame? Never has the pot-boiler flavor of this score seemed more apparent. These four Mercury sides sound as if dubbed from scratchy French originals on 78. Not LP at its most impressive. Moreover, they have got two movements of the Poulenc "Suite Française" in wrong order.

Dukas' "L'Apprenti Sorcier" is the kind of score that almost plays itself. Enrique Jorda puts the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra through the appropriate paces and London has obliged with bright ffrr (LP 193, $4.95). Is there never to be an end of this pesky apprentice? Next time that the attention of recording companies wanders in the direction of Dukas I suggest some excerpts from "Ariane et Barbe-Bleue." The snatches that Toscanini broadcast a few years ago have whetted this listener's appetite.

I am a sucker for the spoken word against a background of music, no matter whether it is Olivier and William Walton, Zorina and Honegger, or Dietrich and Friedrich Holländer. This penchant puts me in a receptive mood for Milhaud's "Cantate de l'Enfant et de la Mère," in which Madeleine Milhaud intones poems by Maurice Carême while the Juilliard String Quartet and Leonid Hambro, pianist, strum away in the background (Columbia LP 4305, $4.85). My better critical self tells me that the poetry borders on fustian, that Milhaud has written more inspired music. However, I keep on playing the disc, delighted with Mme. Milhaud's savoring of *la langue* and her keen sense of rhythmic propulsion. Overside Milhaud himself plays his "Household Muse," a collection of fifteen short pieces for piano. It is a contemporary answer to Schumann's "Fantasiestücke"; and a very good answer.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's and Albums

See page 49 for Pop Report

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: "Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue," etc. Gyorgy Sandor, piano. Columbia LP 4304, $4.85.	By the evidence of this "Chromatic Fantasy," Sandor has been misleading us with his Chopin and Liszt. Bach playing with so much style and sense is by no means common. The C minor Fantasia is also well played, as are the fast movements of the B minor Partita (No. 7) on the overside. However, some of the ornaments in the slower sections are ungainly. Excellent recording throughout.
Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor. Claudio Arrau, piano, with Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Ormandy. Columbia LP 4302, $4.85.	Arrau and Ormandy have an admirable success with a work of which there is no acceptable domestic version (the Toscanini-Rubinstein being the blemished thing it is). This playing has not the ultimate deftness of the Solomon-Boult (HMV) but it is very close to it, and, of course, a much better buy on LP. Sonorous, finely balanced recording.
Beethoven: Sonata in E flat, Opus 31, No. 3. Artur Rubinstein, piano. RCA Victor album 1371, $4.75; 45 rpm, $3.35.	Rubinstein's enthusiasm for this work (of which he has previously recorded the Menuet) is understandable and evident. However, it seems to me a mannered exhibition of his virtuosity rather than a straightforward playing of a delightful, not at all complex work. He does splendidly with the G major Impromptu (Opus 90, No. 3) of Schubert on the odd side. Remarkably clean piano sound on the 45 rpm.
Beethoven: Sonata in C, Opus 102, No. 1. Pierre Fournier, cello, and Artur Schnabel, piano. RCA Victor album 1370, $3.50; 45 rpm, $2.20.	A companion issue to the A major (Opus 69) sonata by the same players, compounded of similar virtues of refinement, nobility of style, and unity of expression. Schnabel sometimes usurps more than the piano's due share of prominence, but the balance, for the most part, is excellent. There has not recently been a recording of this superbly lyric work, wherefore it may be remarked that it is, musically, on the level of the "Archduke" trio and the A flat sonata (Opus 101), especially the wonderful rich second movement.
Bliss: "Miracle in the Gorbals." Constant Lambert conducting the Royal Opera Orchestra. Columbia LP 2117, $3.85.	Nothing miraculous about the Bliss score for the Helpmann ballet, but the performance and recording are excellent, for those interested. Overside are the engaging "Giselle" excerpts previously available in conventional form in Columbia album X-277.
Chopin: "Les Sylphides." Roger Désormière conducting the Conservatoire Orchestra. London LP 192, $4.95.	That rightness of feeling, in accent and phrasing, which were distinctions of Désormière's treatment of the recent "Sylvia" and "Coppélia" excerpts is rather conspicuously lacking here. The orchestration (by an unidentified hand) is thick, the playing lacking grace and delicacy. Not the best ffrr, either.
Dvorak: Symphony in E minor ("From the New World"). Stokowski conducting his orchestra. RCA Victor LP 1013, $5.45.	An excellent LP transfer of the splendid-sounding "New World" (one of the best American recordings to date) reviewed in RECORDINGS, Feb. 1949. Despite Stokowski's tamperings with the instrumentation, this is the most spirited, best-played version now available.
Franck: Quintet in F minor. Chigi Quintet. London LP 201, $5.85.	Bernard Braddon's annotation on this issue tells us that the composer, in enthusiasm for the playing of the pianist at the première, made him a present of the manuscript. This happened to be Saint-Saëns, who left the manuscript on the piano when he departed. My sympathies are all with Saint-Saëns, for there is little in this work that has not been heard previously, or after, in the Symphony, the "Variations Symphoniques," or the Prelude, Aria, and Finale. The performance is first rate, especially Sergio Lorenzi's piano playing; likewise the recording.
Goldmark: Concerto in A minor. Peter Rybar, violin, with Vienna Symphony conducted by Henry Swoboda. Westminster LP 50-10, $5.95.	A likely addition to Westminster's catalogue of "first times," assuming that you're either a Goldmark fan or a fancier of violinistic esoterica. Its attractions are limited otherwise, in a style somewhere between Mendelssohn and Brahms. Rybar plays expressively, with fine tone, save in the finale, where his technique is hard put upon. Excellent recording.
Mozart: Sonata No. 26 in B flat (K. 378). Isaac Stern, violin, with Alexander Zakin, piano. Columbia LP 4301, $4.85.	Still another version of this great, but overfavored work (previous violinists include Goldberg, Schneider, and Heifetz, with their most likely partners). Just what Stern's idea of this work may be is hard to tell, for the work is so peculiarly microphoned (in an empty-concert-hall sound) that mere accompanying figures are given undue prominence. Moreover, Stern's tone has a celloish thickness hardly characteristic, and at its brightest sounds more like a viola than a violin. With it is the charming Haydn Concerto in C, previously issued as Columbia album 799.
Puccini: "Ah! Manon," from "Manon Lescaut" and other arias. Galliano Masini, tenor. Cetra-Soria LP 50, 034, $4.85.	Masini spares nothing, either himself or the music, in delivering vigorously dramatic versions of this "Manon" excerpt, the expectable two from "Tosca," and other usual matter from "Aida," "Adriana Lecouvreur," "Fedora," "Andrea Chénier," and "Cavalleria." A little too much whine and sob for my taste, in all. No conductors or orchestras indicated. Good routine recording.
Rimsky-Korsakov: "Sinfonietta on Russian Themes." Vienna Symphony conducted by Henry Swoboda. Westminster LP 50-8, $5.95.	An attractive addition to the Korsakov literature, played with sympathy and spirit by the versatile Swoboda, recorded with the skill now expected of Westminster. The folk themes are all engaging, particularly the famous one most of us "discovered" in Stravinsky's "Ronde des Princesses" of "L'Oiseau de Feu." The overside offers the G minor "Slavonic Rhapsody" (No. 2) of Dvorak, an agreeable if unexciting example of the composer's style.
Smetana: "Bartered Bride" Overture, with Royalton Kisch conducting the London Philharmonic, etc. London LP 200, $5.85.	A prize grab bag from London, with three conductors (Collins and Georg Solti are the others) working away at such divergent matter as Verdi's "Forza del Destino" Overture, a waltz sequence from "Der Rosenkavalier," and the "Dream Pantomime" from "Hansel und Gretel." The last of these, directed by Collins, is the most sonorous and sensitive of the lot, but hardly an excuse for recommending ordinary performances of the others. Doesn't make sense to me.
Verdi: "O tu Palermo" ("Vespri Siciliani") and other arias. Cesare Siepi, basso. Cetra-Soria LP 50,035, $4.85.	An impressive demonstration of voice, artistry, and emotional projection by the vastly gifted Siepi, who is not yet thirty. The Verdi excerpts, in addition to "O tu Palermo," include the fourth-act soliloquy from "Don Carlos," "Tu sul labbro" ("Nabucco"), and "Infelice" ("Ernani"). On the overside the generous list continues with the "Serenata" from "Giovanni," "La Calunnia," and excerpts from "Sonnambula," "Mefistofele," and "L'Italiana in Algieri." Fine recording. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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Speaking of Trends

AUDIO fans will rejoice over the news that an all-purpose turntable has just been produced on the heels of, and logically out of, the recent perfection of the all-groove needle. Just as the all-groove needle does away with the need for switching styli when standard discs are intermingled with those of the microgroove variety, the new all-purpose turntable makes it unnecessary to change rpm's.

Development of this instrument proceeded in a fashion similar to that of the all-groove needle. That is, the rpm values of all existing playing speeds were added together and divided by three (78 + 45 + 33 1/3 ÷ 3 = 52.1 [approx.]). Thus the all-purpose player turns at a constant rate of 52.1 rpm.

Results are favorable. Although standard discs sound somewhat slow when played at the new speed, this disadvantage is more than offset by the cheering fact that extreme high frequencies on the finest wide-range standards are brought well within the reproductional capability of the most mediocre amplifier.

Best results so far have been obtained by playing 45's. Because the

new equipment operates a mere seven rpm's faster than their normal recorded speed, the 45's sound, if a little shrill on the peaks, just about right. No report can presently be issued on how LP's sound on the new equipment. All 33 1/3 discs on the West Coast have been arbitrarily shelved until diamond styli are made available in quantity out this way.

* * *

By far the most heartening announcement of the decade for audio fans comes from Smoothgroove, Calif., where tests are currently being made of a long-playing microgroove record embossed in a sapphire disc. To date the new sapphire record has been played 7,846 times with no wear whatsoever, using a graphite stylus and immersing the entire playing unit in an oil bath. Unfortunately, the cost of such a record ($168,000 for the ten-inch size) will not make it popular, but its inventor feels that the very awareness of its existence will diminish the number of suicides among audio fans, who early this year learned that they had been destroying their LP's by playing them with sapphire needles.

* * *

Remember the good old days when you kept a cactus plant around the house for an endless supply of free, soft, gentle phonograph needles? Well, from Blench, Ariz., comes news about a pigmy cactus plant whose spines fall off when their points attain a radius of exactly .001 inch. LP addicts who are interested in obtaining such a plant are urged to write at once to the secretary of the Blench Chamber of Commerce, who already has let it be known that spine-tips can be increased to an all-groove size of .002 inch by use of a special fertilizer.

More later. —MIKE LISBON.

9

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

"WELL, we have had to wait what some people thought was an unreasonably long time for the long-playing record in this country, but at last here it is, and it is really gratifying to be able to affirm with complete conviction that it was worth waiting for. To Decca belongs the honor of being the first to issue it in this country, and if future records are as well chosen and as well made as the first few I have heard, and of course they will be, then without doubt a new era for the gramophone has opened."

This quotation is the opening paragraph of the July editorial in *The Gramophone*, and it was written by the same Compton Mackenzie who, a bare two months ago, described as "nonsense" the idea "that the LP record can be compared with electrical recording as a revolutionary advance." How are the mighty fallen! Without once referring to his previously expressed opinions on the subject he goes on to enthuse at length about LP records in general and about certain individual releases in particular; a somewhat pathetic performance from so well-known a personality.

The first hectic month of LP in Britain has been a fascinating experience, punctuated by endless demonstrations which, until the first releases were officially available late in June, were confined to whatever American copies one could beg, borrow, or steal. My own *pièce de résistance* was London's Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, a good recording technically and quite well played by Ricci, but after having heard it several times daily for over three weeks I felt that I could bear not to hear it for the next ten years at least. Fortunately, towards the end of this period a sympathetic friend lent me his copy of the Columbia LP of Schubert's "Great" C major and I was able to alternate between the two. Most people were very favorably impressed by the American production for it has a richer, warmer timbre than any American 78 rpm recording we have heard here, and its clean, if not very extended, treble won the warmest admiration. In view of the fact that Karajan's recent set was most disappointing from every aspect, Columbia could do worse than to include Walter's magnificent performance when they release their first batch of LP's.

For the past fortnight the better part (better in quantity, not necessarily in quality) of Decca's first release has been available to the public, as has one of their "playing desks." Unfortunately, Decca cannot be described as the world's best organized firm and, as so often before, their publicity has been a few jumps ahead of their factory's ability to deliver the goods. Thus, a fair proportion of the records available on paper cannot in fact be bought yet, and deliveries of the most sought-after player unit (a two-speed job with interchangeable pickup heads) have not even commenced. In a way it seems a pity that they did not wait another month or two, until a good supply of equipment could have been ready to go to the shops. As matters stand at present only a handful of people have so far been able to obtain the means wherewith they might play LP, with the result that sales are still very small.

IT IS too early yet to assess the effect of Compton Mackenzie's remarkable *volte-face*, but it will undoubtedly reassure many of those who, because of the past unfavorable reports in *The Gramophone*, were deterred from taking the plunge. The prevailing uncertainty about future actions of HMV and Columbia in relation to LP has also acted as a brake, and it would not be unjust to opine that judiciously planted rumors—to the effect that these companies intend to challenge Decca LP with RCA Victor's abortive 45-rpm system — have been of great service to Decca's rivals. One firm of radio manufacturers has been so scared by the possibility that it is to fit Garrard three-speed changers to their new models. As far as I can ascertain there is no factual foundation for this gossip; on the contrary, EMI are said to be working frantically on LP equipment, clearly worried by the start Decca has on them. Any uncertainty in the public's mind is thus of the utmost value to them, since it will in many cases delay the purchase of discs and equipment until their own wares will be before the public. *C'est la guerre*, I suppose, but there is scarcely any doubt whatever that LP will be as great a success here in time as it is already in the States.

One feature that has impressed many others beside myself is the vastly superior sound obtainable from LP on quite moderate equipment, such as an ordinary radio set with playing attachment or a cheap radiogram. This is truly astonishing when compared with the 78-rpm and radio performance of such combinations (we have as yet no regular FM service here). We may ascribe this partly to the fact that such sets tend to be very deficient at the upper end of the frequency curve, this failing being compensated by the rising LP recording characteristic. Furthermore, the gentler recording level leads to less distortion and pickup buzz than is normally experienced in the case of 78 rpm.

It is a great pity that the first Decca list contains a handful of discs that will do more harm than good: Beethoven's C minor and Tchaikovsky's F minor symphonies, in both of which some grooves run into one another, and the Curzon-Szell "Emperor" Concerto, where careless dubbing has led to a marked alteration of pitch in two places, a truly horrible effect. For the most part, however, the discs reflect great credit on the engineers, none more so than the two Delibes ballet suites played with such refinement by the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra under Désormière. "Petrouchka" is certainly the most startling of them all, but amid some unbelievably realistic passages there are also tutti that tend to blast, and at times the relative placing of certain instruments is most odd. Why, for instance, about halfway through the third tableau, should the flutist be virtually on top of the microphone (one can hear his breath) when the bassoonist, who follows with a passage of equal importance, is obviously placed at the back of the orchestra?

I IMAGINE that American readers must by now be a little bored reading about our reactions to LP, particularly since I am unable to report on a single disc that is not already common currency in the U. S. I would merely add by way of postscript (though I cannot promise to keep off the subject in future months!) that of the thirty-odd discs I have so far studied none has given me greater pleasure than that containing the "Brandenburg" Concertos Nos. 4 and 6, so finely played by the Stuttgart

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Chamber Orchestra, and that my not-quite-four-year-old son is inordinately proud of his "ten-inch long-playing record" of "Peter and the Woof" (sic), telling everybody that "it used to be three twelve-inch records."

After a prolonged spell of LP it seems quite strange to return to the irritating break and the constant surface hiss of ordinary discs, and after the hours and yet more hours of LP I had to sit through—not all Decca's performances are of the first water—the brevity of the 78 lists this month (and the complete nonarrival of those announced by Decca) just about saved me from a bad bout of aural indigestion. Just before the LP chaos descended on Decca's factory they did manage to send me the Solti recording of Haydn's "Drumroll" Symphony (already reviewed by RECORDINGS in the LP version). I not only found this performance outstandingly beautiful, but feel that the three discs contain what is to my mind the most beautiful and subtle realization of orchestral sound yet heard through a loudspeaker. Haydn's orchestration does not, of course, lend itself to startling effects à la "Petrouchka," but never before have I been so near to forgetting that I was listening to "canned" music. The great Haydn revival, which appears to have reached tremendous proportions in the States, is also very noticeable here. The latest contribution comes from Barbirolli and the Hallé, newly promoted to HMV red label, who give us a most acceptable, pleasantly recorded performance of the Master's G minor Symphony, No. 83, nicknamed "La Poule"—and how charmingly our feathered friend clucks in the first movement. Barbirolli is not my ideal interpreter of this kind of music but, until someone better comes along, he will be gratefully accepted.

THE not very recent Szigeti-Walter Beethoven Concerto has just been released here by Columbia; it begins with great promise but one is soon disappointed by the falling off of Szigeti's playing since he last waxed it about eighteen years ago, and the solo violin tone has a most unpleasant, rapierlike edge. No one, in my view, plays Beethoven's E flat Quartet, Op. 127, with as much insight as Busch, and it was a sad day when recently the fine recording made by his group in the Thirties was deleted. It has now been replaced by a new version featuring the Hungarian Quartet, but for all their great ability they never seem to get under the skin of the music as did Busch. The tempos are all on the fast side with the exception of the scherzo, the slow movement in particular (and what a slow movement it is, perhaps the *primus inter pares* of all the late Beethoven slow movements) loses much of its spiritual quality.

Of the smaller fry only three discs need be mentioned, the first of them orchestral. Furtwängler has turned his attention this month to Mendelssohn, a composer whose music he had to forego while he was serving the Third Reich. His conducting of the "Fingal's Cave" Overture is a ravishing, if highly personal, piece of work in which the Vienna strings shine. Flagstad's admirers, who may be getting anxious because she is not doing all the hoped-for Wagner excerpts as quickly as they might like (this month she turns contralto for Brahms's "Gestillte Sehnsucht," not on the whole one of her more successful ventures), will be reassured by the news that she waxed Act II of "Tristan" with Svanholm, Weber, and Dobrowen a few days ago. Lastly we have a singer who has never yet failed to give me the greatest pleasure, Gerard Souzay. What an appealing voice he has, and what lovely phrasing and diction he treats us to in Debussy's "La Grotte," "Mandoline," and No. 2 of the "Trois Ballades de Villon." —THOMAS HEINITZ.

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PIANO QUINTET IN F MINOR (Franck)
Chigi Quintet (Quintetto Chigiano)
LPS-209 — $4.95
SYMPHONY NO. 8 IN B MINOR "UNFINISHED" (Schubert)
The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips
LLP-203 — $5.95
PRINCE IGOR: POLOVTSIAN DANCES (Borodin)
The London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by Eduard van Beinum
EL AMOR BRUJO—Ballet Suite (Falla)
The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins
LPS-210 — $4.95
FANTASIESTUCKE (Schumann)
Jacqueline Blancard, piano

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Some Highs and Lows

ARMS AND THE DISCOPHILE

SOME while back there was a promise here to look at the fancier nonchanging equipment now available for those who would forego the alleged convenience of the changer in favor of more professional perfection. Herewith some general pointers on pickup arms for particular people. Motors and tables later.

Quality in the "hi-fi" field is decidedly a matter of diminishing returns. The best costs a lot more—not a little. There are those of us, and not always the affluent either, who suffer so over the priceless difference between the ultimate and the not-quite-penultimate that money ceases (emotionally) to count. Let us have the best then, and well worth it—but the following pickup arms will cost you from twenty to fifty dollars or more —not unreasonable pricing compared with top-quality speakers and amplifiers.

Right now the best in pickup arms is very wonderful, whereas a year or so back the best was appallingly bad —at least for LP. And this, thanks to a realization that LP needs far more than a new point and low needle pressure. When LP arrived, most existing professional arms were "converted" merely by adding counterweights. Results were dreadful. LP records buzzed and blasted. Grooves gouged out developed repeats at the first playing as though vinyl plastic were soft as cheese, which it is not. As usual, the records were blamed. The fault was largely in the playing equipment.

If the cartridge itself was vital [RECORDINGS, Nov. 1949], the arm—it now appears—was equally so, both in the actual quality of sound you hear and in grosser matters of tracking and wear. Light pressure achieved by adding massive counterweighting is useless, for dead mass is hard to move and pickups must move, both sidewise and up and down. At one-sixth ounce, some 300 grooves to the inch, no LP needle can be expected to throw around pounds of dead weight and leave the record unscathed. Resonances, arm vibrations are important, too, and have had to be deviously coped with.

Extended experiment with all of this and more has led to moderate arm improvements in the low-priced changer field, but far more sensational developments have turned up in the custom-arm area.

THE MOST important new arm and the most sensational is the Pickering model 190, the arm that plays uphill. The 190 is a massive sixteen-inch monster, handsomely modern, that defies gravity. Start it off on an LP record, tip your phonograph over until it is approaching the vertical. The 190 plays right on without so much as a lost note! It will play uphill or downhill equally well, and the jars and bumps that throw older arms out of control will not bother it unduly. Phonographs at 60° angles are not herewith recommended, but unlike the underwater pen, the Pickering benefits from its peculiar ability. It introduces a new standard of stability in LP tracking that is an eye opener for most of us. Its essence is a tricky arm-within-an-arm. The body of the 190 moves sidewise but not up and down; the tiny inside arm that holds the cartridge (Pickering or any standard model) pivots vertically—a division of labor that somehow suggests the universal joint in your car. The main arm (with a long rear projection —it will *not* mount in a suitcase!) puts no weight at all on the cartridge and the balance between its front and rear keeps it weightless, too, when tipped sidewise. The cartridge, in effect, moves a weightless object on frictionless bearings, which, if I get it right, is a most desirable situation. One hundred and ninety is a model of proper damping and compliance and whatnot according to claims. According to my ear it sounds fine.

Pickering has two major rivals at present, Gray and Audak. The Gray 108-B finds another ingenious solution to the problems of LP delicacy. This one is viscous damped—comparing not so much to the universal joint as to the fluid clutch. Squeeze a tube of special jelly into it and arm, cartridge, and all float in a soft, mushy cushion that damps away undesirable vibrations and frictions. • This arm plays tricks, too. Drop it from on high and it glides down to the record with the leisure of a soap bubble. Gliding speed (sidewise and vertical) is adjustable. Cartridge plug-in mounts take standard varieties. This fine arm is more compact than the Pickering but its fluid joint suggests that tipping might be unwise.

The Audak pickup with its "Polyphase" dual magnetic cartridge has been highly praised for tonal quality by engineers. (Tonal range comparable to the Pickering with lower needle talk, output medium-high.) The two-stylus cartridge twists in a second for any speed record; the Audak arm comes in both sixteen-inch and twelve-inch sizes, to taste. A trustworthy nonradical design for most purposes, with only one word of caution: the cartridge is susceptible to hum in some situations where others are not. If yours sounds OK—forget it. This is tonally the best of the dual cartridges for quality, equaling the separate plug-in types, hum aside.

A side item—an interesting and inexpensive English arm and crystal cartridge, perhaps to be introduced here. The Cosmocord "Acos" GP 20 has a thin ten-inch arm of cream plastic, ultra light; the two tiny cartridges, one for each groove, slide on and off at the end and are properly weighted. The arm tracks anything; tone quality is very little different from the best magnetics, and the unit is both compact and rugged. Good buy, if and when.

NOTE: A demonstration of the new Columbia one-speed LP changer (I haven't tried it out at length) merits its preliminary comment as promised last month. The unit uses the new CAC crystal cartridge, wide range, probably the best crystal yet introduced and very nearly equal to the magnetics. The changer mechanism is not unlike Webster-Chicago's 100 (see last month) in its overhead arm and center-push device. But where 100 adjusts itself automatically for record size via a damageable feeler arm, the Columbia machine automatically finds the size via inconspicuous buttons and side levers, out of the way. Good. It will even intermix to some extent. A supersimplified machine, at a very proper price which will make the seven-inch Columbias more useful.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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ITALIAN REBELS

(*Continued from page* 37)

though I am, I know that he can at times be tedious and repetitious, something hardly surprising in view of his huge output: there are barren spots in the first movement of the G minor violin concerto, and much of the symphony in F merely rehashes earlier works. Similarly, I find the Boccherini D minor concerto for the flute at the best unimaginative, at the worst —in the *rondeau*—pure corn. And the Marcello concerto is largely derivative: the adagio clearly betrays his debt to Vivaldi.

But all the rest is, to these ears, joy unalloyed.

Corelli, that modest, miserly protégé of Cardinal Ottoboni who set a mark for all later composers to shoot at by leaving an estate worth $300,000, is concise, lucid, and utterly charming in the two concerti grossi and the sonata; and—rare virtue!—when he has said everything he has to say, he stops forthwith. The symphony in C displays perfectly Vivaldi's inexhaustible melodic inventiveness; that D major concerto grosso is, in the first and third movements, stentorian, Beethovenesque, anticipatory of Protestant hymnology, and provides in the second a melodic line for the solo violin of haunting loveliness. The violin concertos are equally delightful. Boccherini's quartets, impeccably performed by the Guilet group, will surely lead to reinvestigation of his hundred-odd published ones. They are enchanting throughout, and the last movement of the G minor has a saucy prankiness Joe Venuti may well envy. As for the Boccherini symphony, the first of his score or more to get onto records, gorgeous is the only word for it.

That leaves me to mention only the Haydn octet, and I confess I do not know what to say about it. Myself, I feel that compositions for two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, and two horns fall into the category of stunt music, even if Papa Haydn does write it; and even Commentator Sam Morgenstern's assurance that the piece, in *rococo galant* style, "abounds in variety of instrumental colors" does not convince me otherwise. But the Bläservereinigung der Wiener Philharmoniker plays the music well, and there will doubtless be enthusiasts to defend it.

I have refrained from comparing these recordings with Italian ones mentioned in my several reports from Rome because I should have to trust to memory to do so. My Italian records, which are following me home, have not yet reached me. My impression is that Italian musicians, having grown up with this music in their ears, are perhaps more at home with it, and so play with more dash; and of course Molinari, Ferrero, and Parodi, among others, are recognized authorities in the field. But this is an impression, nothing more.

—JOHN P. MCKNIGHT.

Haydn-Mozart Issues

(To Be Reviewed Next Month)

HAYDN: Symphonies No. 22 ("Der Philosoph") and No. 35. Jonathan Sternberg conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. (Haydn Society LP 1009.)

MOZART: "Posthorn" Serenade (KV. 320). Sternberg conducting the Vienna State Opera Orchestra (HSLP 1012.)

MOZART: Serenade No. 3 in D (K.185). Chamber orchestra conducted by F. Oubradous; with Quintet in E flat, K.452. (Mercury LP 10031.)

MOZART: Concertone in C (K.190); Symphony No. 23 (K.131). Henry Swoboda conducting the Vienna Symphony. (Westminster LP 50-13.)

MOZART: Symphonies No. 18 (K.130) and 30 (K.202). Same as above. (Westminster LP 50-12.)

MOZART: Symphony No. 33 (K.319). Serge Koussevitzky conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. (RCA Victor album 1369.)

MOZART: Quintet in E flat for Strings (K.614). Vienna Konzerthaus Quintet; with Quintet for Piano and Winds (K.452). Roland Raupenstrauch, piano, and Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. (Westminster LP 50-7.)

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MGL-5—Two 12" Records in Deluxe Album $9.70

MOZART: THE IMPRESARIO—Comedy with Music in One Act (sung in English). Edith Gordon (soprano), Lois Hunt (soprano), Luigi Vellucci (tenor), Mordecai Bauman with Chamber Orchestra under Hermann Herz.
MG15025—10" Record $3.85

BACH: CANTATA No. 78—"Jesu der mu meine Seele". Bavarian Radio Choir and Chamber Orchestra under Josef Kugler with Clothilde Schmidt (soprano), Maria Engehardt (contralto), Richard Brünner (tenor), Ernst Conrad Haase (baritone).
MG15010—10" Record $3.85

MOZART: VESPERAE SOLENNES DE CONFESSORE (K. 399). Bavarian Radio Choir and Orchestra under Josef Kugler with Valerie Bak (soprano), Hanne Münch (contralto), Richard Brünner (tenor), Heinz Maria Lins (baritone).
MG15014—10" Record $3.85

SCHUBERT: QUARTET No. 13 IN A MINOR, Op. 29; **MENDELSSOHN:** QUARTET No. 1 in E-FLAT, Op. 12. Fine Arts Quartet of the American Broadcasting Co.
MG10065—12" Record $4.85

BRAHMS: TRIO IN E-FLAT for Piano, Violin, and French Horn, Op. 40. Annie d'Arco, Georges Alès, Jean Devémy.
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SHOSTAKOVICH: TRIO IN E MINOR, Op. 67. Dmitri Shostakovich (piano), David Oistrakh (violin), Milos Sadlo ('cello).

PROKOFIEFF: QUARTET No. 2, Op. 92. Fine Arts Quartet of the American Broadcasting Co.
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SHOSTAKOVICH: QUARTET No. 3, Op. 73. Fine Arts Quartet of the American Broadcasting Co.
MG10049—12" Record $4.85

BEETHOVEN: PIANO CONCERTO No. 5 in E-FLAT, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Victor Schioler with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra under Carl Garaguly.
MG10060—12" Record $4.85

GRIEG: PIANO CONCERTO IN A MINOR, Op. 16. Victor Schioler with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra under Erik Tuxen. MG15012—10" Record $3.85

BEETHOVEN: PIANO CONCERTO No. 2 IN B-FLAT, Op. 19. Heinz Schröter with the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Hans Altmann.
MG15013—10" Record $3.85

BRAHMS: SERENADE No. 2 IN A MAJOR, Op. 16; **MOZART:** SERENADE IN C MINOR for Eight Wind Instruments (K. 388). Members of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra under Hans Rosbaud.
MG10039—12" Record $4.85

SCHUMANN: SYMPHONY No. 2 IN C MAJOR, Op. 61. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra under Georg Ratjen.
MG10059—12" Record $4.85

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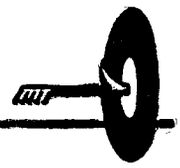
HITS AND MISSES



MUGGSY SPANIER stepped into our parlor, on wax, this month and, as usual, took our heart completely. Personal affection may be rash in the public prints, but here it is. We have been addicted to the veteran cornetist ever since the Twenties, when he wore a clown suit in the old Ted Lewis band. Not one of the great soloists, such as Armstrong or Beiderbecke, he is as warm and pulsing a leader of Dixieland ensembles as the music has known, and to hear him jetting out his lead in "Dixie Flyer" (Mercury 5424, 79¢) is to suffer the brief illusion that all is well in the best of possible worlds. Muggsy has with him his historic trombone partner, George Brunis, who is often given to horseplay but behaves himself wonderfully in Spanier's company. There is also lovely work by the clarinetist, Darnell Howard, and the other side of the record is an appealing blues, "Lazy Piano Man," featuring the band's professor, Floyd Bean.

Our favorite Minnesotan rides again. The spirited Doc Evans of Northfield, and, as the modern press agents say, his cornet and his jazz band present two new albums, "Blues in Dixieland" and "Command Performance" (JOCO Jazz Heritage IV and V, $5 apiece). These are very stimulating operations. Since we first touched on the Evans phenomenon the rest of the band has changed entirely. It now consists of Al Jenkins, trombone; Art Myers, clarinet; Mel Grant, piano; Micky Stienke, drums, and Biddy Bastian, bass. This troupe may be a little short on the lyric possibilities of the Dixieland idiom—as realized so beautifully by Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton—but it is short on nothing else. In the rugged, stomping Dixieland vein the balance and punch of the ensemble is remarkable. Evans remains an outstanding cornetist of the clean, Beiderbeckean persuasion, and Jenkins is a galvanic trombonist, solo or tailgate. This is one of the country's first brass teams. The "Blues in Dixieland" include such classics as "Jimtown" and "Dallas," while the "Command Performance" ranges from "Copenhagen" to a stomping version of "Missouri Waltz." The band's pianist, Mel Grant, plays three original rags and a blues—all worth the fancier's attention—in another album, "Professor Ragtime" (JOCO Jazz Heritage III, $2.50.)

Other Dixieland news: the drummer Gene Krupa has returned to small-band jazz with the apparent idea of combining its appeal with that of hill-billy numbers. The fusion is lively enough in "I Want Gold in My Pocket" (RCA Victor 20-3816, 79¢) and the reverse is the classic "At the Jazz Band Ball" with new, amusing, and sometimes unintelligible lyrics by Johnny Mercer. Jelly Roll Morton's old "Kansas City Stomps" is played in Mortonesque style by the Castle Jazz Band (Castle HF 8, $1.05), whose trombonist, billed as George Bruns, is either the perennial George Brunis or a striking imposter.

The New York press has flowered recently with photographs of a chanteuse named Julie Wilson, whose entire low-necked presence suggests a devotion to boudoir balladry. Her "A Man Could Be a Wonderful Thing" (Columbia 38578, 79¢) is sexy, to be sure, and safely escapes the charge of innuendo; it is forthright enough to register completely with the officers of Universal Brake Shoe, out on the town and the expense account and having a hell of a time. Miss Wilson delivers it with a whole repertory of little croaks, rasps, and cheeps calculated to promote the highest possible degree of businessman's libido.

We prefer our Sousa straight—in march time, as written. But stomp versions of the master, with hot solos, are quite acceptable when done with the solid command of Bob Crosby's Bob Cats in "El Capitan" and "Stars and Stripes Forever" (Coral 60217, 79¢). And while dwelling on hallowed matters, let us say that there are certain simple pieces in the American hymnody that have a power over us not sanctioned by the more advanced conservatories or M. Stravinsky's salon. We can hold the esthetic line—just barely—when confronted with "The Old Rugged Cross" but we admit to no presence of mind whatever in the case of "The Garden" (". . . and He walks with me, and He talks with me . . ."). The two numbers are now back to back (RCA Victor 21-0344, 79¢); they are admirably rendered by the cowboy singer Roy Rogers and his partner, Dale Evans. And we think it a shame if any home-grown citizen fails to get anything out of either of them.

—WILDER HOBSON.

THE ROOTS OF JAZZ

(*Continued from page* 36)

of the subsidiary material in these albums they have a unique musical flavor. They are sung by Annie Grace Horn Dodson, who remembers them from childhood, whose father learned them first in slave days when they were a means of communication between workers on neighboring plantations. They might more properly be defined as chants rather than calls, chants of an extremely simple structure, the "Field Hands' Call" having about the same number of notes as, and more than a slight resemblance to, the call and response of the thrush. The "Children's Call" is really a holler, a blues form in embryo. Most remarkable of the calls, in content, is Enoch Brown's "Complaint Call," which he sang as a sort of magico-religious challenge each time he came to the bridge at Livingston:

Oh, the times don't get no better here,
I'm goin' down the road . . .

Familiar to folk-song enthusiasts will be the themes of the lullaby "Soon As My Back's Turned" and "Now Your Man Done Gone." Jazz connoisseurs will recognize "Kansas City Blues" and "Salty Dog," both sung by "Red" Willie Smith. The latter is accompanied on a "tub" by Huston Townsend. This is not *any* old tub; rather, an Americanized model of the African earth bow, the bottom of the inverted tub acting as a sounding board for a cord braced by a stick attached to the outer edge. The cord is plucked with thumb and forefinger, suggesting the possible origin of the "plucked" string bass fiddle style common to jazz. The harmonica lends itself to descriptive effects and Joe Brown of Livingston is something of a folk virtuoso on this instrument, wailing out the blues theme of "Mama Don't Tear My Clothes" and handling with dexterity his version of the traditional railroad theme, in this instance "Southern Pacific."

Thus, with or without voice, on tub or harmonica, utilizing young or old, Courlander's Alabama researches acquaint us with a spring of folk influence still feeding, if remotely, the gushing flow of jazz—and perhaps, vice versa.

Charles Edward Smith is the author of a guide to popular records, "The Jazz Record Book." He collaborated with Frederic Ramsey, Jr., on "Jazzmen."

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Recordings Reports on Current Pop Releases

PERFORMER, SONG, DATA	REPORT
Bolger, Ray: "You Can't Take It with You." Decca 27063, 79¢.	Ray Bolger as a pop vocalist is an appealing prospect, but the material here is no more suited to him than he is to it. "You Can't Take It with You" is a pseudo-spiritual arguing against frugality, and its partner, "Francie," must look better in "Peep Show" than it sounds here. Try again, Ray.
Burrows, Abe: "Sweet Memories." Columbia 38830, 79¢.	Those who have been looking at Burrows on TV and wondering where he got his reputation as a funny man will find the answer here. Sight unseen he delivers two of his engaging parodies of popular songs—"Sweet Memories," which owes more than a little to "These Foolish Things," is especially attractive, and the overside "Western type" is almost as good. What its title may be I can't say, for my copy is labeled "Sweet Memories" on both sides.
Flanagan, Ralph: "If I Had a Magic Carpet." RCA Victor 20-3820, 79¢.	Smooth work by Flanagan and his able helpers on this ballad and the overside "Down the Line," a brisk instrumental item in the fashion of his mentor, Miller.
Gilbeaux, Gene, and orchestra: "Dynaflow." RCA Victor 22-0091, 79¢.	Gilbeaux's name is without previous meaning to me, but he knows a good beat from a bad one, and this music really moves. On the overside, ""I've Got What It Takes," there's more attention to jazz fundamentals by a spirited miss called Bixie Crawford, who sounds like the young Ella Fitzgerald.
Kirk, Lisa, "I Didn't Slip, I Wasn't Pushed, I Fell." RCA Victor 20-3823, 79¢.	As if Lisa Kirk's voice isn't enough this effort is embellished by a choir of whistlers, Kostelanetz strings in a David Rose pizzicato mood (Hugo Winterhalter is actually the conductor), and a fade-out ending. Overside there is a big enough chorus to sing the "Messiah," in spite of which Kirk manages to sing "Love Like Ours" quite charmingly. The whole effect is as intimate as a rendezvous in the Grand Central Terminal.
Kirsten, Dorothy: "Soon" and six other Gershwin tunes. Columbia LP 2129, $3.85.	The trade by which Columbia got Kirsten and RCA Victor took Stevens is apparently destined to mean more for Tin-Pan Alley than the Metropolitan. Here the former is immersed in a warm bath of Percy Faith orchestral sound, and manages the unlikely feat of sounding like any other crooner. She even pronounces the "time it is," "climate is" rhyme of "Soon" without stumbling. Among the choice tunes are "Someone to Watch Over Me," "Love Walked In," "I've Got a Crush on You," "Mine," "Embraceable You," "Our Love Is Here to Stay," and "Do, Do, Do."
Laine, Frankie: "You're Wonderful." Mercury 1179, 79¢.	Unless you like vibrato—and I don't—Laine is not for you, sounding here like a pocket-sized Eckstine. As for the tune, Gershwin did it better in "S'Wonderful" and Berlin in "They Say That Falling in Love." Overside Laine gives a hot-foot to "Exactly Like You." The Harry Geller accompaniment deserves better than Laine's yowling noises.
Nichols, Red: "Ida!" and seven other tunes. Brunswick LP 58009, $2.85.	Melodic nostalgia in long-playing form and remarkably durable on all counts, including reproduction, which is better than the twenty-odd years of use would argue to be possible. "Ida" is a delight, "Avalon" scarcely less good, "Feelin' No Pain," "Boneyard Shuffle," and "Washboard Blues" of customary quality. Among the "Pennies" who came and went for these dates were Jimmy Dorsey, Pee Wee Russell, Miff Mole, Fud Livingston, Eddie Lang, and Lennie Hayton. And if for no other reason than hearing what a "hot" celesta might sound like, this is a collector's item: Artie Schutt is the operator on "Avalon."
Schoen, Vic: "I Could Write a Book." Decca 27078, 79¢.	Probably the new-found popularity of "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered" is responsible also for the appearance of this sister-tune from the score of "Pal Joey," leading one to hope that in due time the desired full-length treatment of that grand production will be undertaken. Schoen's version is sleepy rather than dreamy; likewise the overside, "I Cross My Fingers," a minor effort in a major key.
Shaw, Artie: "Then I'll Remember April." Decca 27056, 79¢.	A rather dry April that Shaw's remembering, I'd say, judging by his own standard in such melodic matters. Overside the legendary abilities are in better order for a really American "Continental," a version that you'd gladly pay a dollar, let alone a Continental, for. How about "Some Enchanted Evening," Artie?

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QUINTET, B FLAT FOR PIANO & WIND
Piano—Roland Raupenstrauch; Flute—Hans Recnizek; Clarinet—Leopold Wlach; Horn—Gottfried Von Frieberg; Bassoon — Karl Oehlberger

WL 50-20
MOZART:
SYMPHONIE CONCERTANTE, E FLAT MAJOR, K-APP. 9
Wind group of Vienna Philhar. Orch. Chamber Orchestra Vienna State Opera Conducted by Henry Swoboda
DIVERTIMENTO NO. 2, B FLAT MAJOR, K-ANN 229
Wind group of Vienna Philhar. Orch.

WL 50-21
MOZART:
SERENADE NO. 12, IN C MINOR, FOR WIND INSTRUMENTS, K-388
Wind group of Vienna Philhar. Orch.
SERENADE NO. 11, E FLAT MAJOR, FOR WIND INSTRUMENTS, K-375
Wind group of Vienna Philhar. Orch.

WL 50-22
MOZART:
QUARTET FOR OBOE STRINGS, K-370
Oboe—Hans Kamesch; Viola—Erich Weiss; Violin — Anton Kamper; Cello — Franz Kwarda
DIVERTIMENTO NO. 3, B FLAT MAJOR, FOR 2 CLARINETS & BASSOON K-APP 229
Clarinets—Leopold Wlach; Franz Bartosek Bassoon—Karl Oehlberger
QUARTET FOR FLUTE & STRINGS, A MAJOR, K-298
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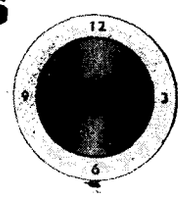

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REVIEWS

(*Continued from page 41*)

chestra, and the Dvorak waltzes are virtually new (save as they resemble his "Slavonic Dances").

Neel's close attention to the problems of tone, articulation, and balance in the string orchestra imparts a special luster and clarity to this performance of the "Holberg" Suite, which is certainly one of the most ingratiating accomplishments of Grieg. As bonus the second side includes the "Cowkeeper's Tune" and "Country Dance" (Opus 63). The string recording is splendidly full.

The Dvorak disc is several stages removed from authenticity, considering Jan Seidel's arrangements of the piano originals, and the transformation of the original masters for LP use, but the heartiness and warmth of the musical thought is preserved in the Jeremias performances. Sweetness of spirit rather than lightness of thought is dominant, but the Dvorak enthusiast will not demur. Dull-sounding, rather opaque recording.

Stokowski of Old

BORODIN: *"Dances of the Polovetzki Maidens" ("Prince Igor"). Leopold Stokowski conducting his symphony orchestra and women's chorus.* (RCA Victor album 1386, $3.50; 45 rpm, $2.20; LP 1054, $5.45.) *The same. Eduard van Beinum conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Choir.* (London LP 203, $5.85.)

The long arm of coincidence has almost over-reached itself here, for the unspecified companion side to both LP's of the Borodin is Falla's "El Amor Brujo"! At that, it is a convenience—for we know conclusively now that there won't be as good an "Amor Brujo" as Reiner's for a while to come.

Minute comparison between the Stokowski and Van Beinum treatments of Borodin is complicated by the former's inclusion of an unfamiliar (and very lovely) chorus as preface to the usual matter, and a "transcription" slightly different from the conventional Rimsky-Korsakov orchestration used by Van Beinum. However, those minute comparisons would be in any event unavailing, for here we have Stokowski in the dazzling mood of the old Philadelphia days working at matter wholly congenial. Van Beinum directs the dances like the thoroughgoing musician he is, but I find my color sense much more absorbed by the sounds from the Stokowski disc. Moreover, the recording is another brilliant product of RCA's 34th Street laboratory, and not at all out-faced by ffrr. Finally, the sounds produced by the women's choir, American style, are much more agreeable than in English. (In line with the description of the orchestra, is this not "his" women's chorus? Or would Mrs. Stokowski object?)

A word about the "Amor Brujo": Stokowski's, of course, is the Republic Sound Studio one issued in March 1947; Anthony Collins conducts the London version, in admirable style, but without the alto voice for Candelas.

The Musing Muse of Chabrier

CHABRIER: *"Menuet Pompeux," "Sous Bois," "Scherzo-Valse," "Idylle," "Impromptu," "Bourrée Fantasque," etc. Soulima Stravinsky, piano.* (Allegro LP 56, $4.85.)

Credit Allegro with a perfectly fine idea in giving two sides of a twelve-inch LP to the virtually unknown piano literature of Emmanuel Chabrier and asking such a suitable pianist as Soulima Stravinsky to execute it. Hard on the heels of our speculation last month about Bizet's "Jeux d'Enfants," and the possibility of its stimulating a Schumann-influenced school of French composition.

Since there is no such thing as a spontaneous thought, I am inclined to attribute this *rediscovery* to the memories of the Balanchine ballet ("Cotillon") which utilizes some of this material, mingled with reminiscences of the balletic treatment of "Jeux d'Enfants." With or without this subconscious tie I am prepared to guarantee any lover of Chopin, Schumann, or Schubert a rewarding half-hour in this demonstration of Chabrier's affinity with their charm, ingenuity, and warm-heartedness—if not their originality or individuality. However, Chabrier has more than a modest amount of both himself, which the junior Stravinsky realizes with fastidious taste, wholly apposite emphasis, and appropriately unjuicy tone. The recording adds little to the merits of the issue, nor does it detract seriously.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Elderly "Dutchman"

SIR: I note your article . . . entitled "Dutchman from Bavaria" [RECORDINGS, June] and thought you would be interested that Leo Riemens of Holland wrote me a few weeks ago that he actually heard this broadcast from Munich in 1939! (I have inquired and find that they *did* have a form of tape recording in Germany that early.) What seems to uphold Riemens's date is his statement that Luise Willer, born 1892, "hasn't been singing for ages."

WILLIAM H. SELTSAM.

Bridgeport, Conn.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *To reader Seltsam, long-time director of the International Record Collector's Club and editor of the invaluable "Metropolitan Annals," our thanks for a pertinent bit of information. It increases our admiration for German tape initiative, if not for what they put on it.*

Where Is Sack?

SIR: Just returned from a trip to Switzerland, you may be interested to learn that I have seen concerts by Erna Sack advertised in all leading Swiss cities, where she sang at the end of May and early in June.

ROBERT BREUER.

Elmhurst, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *From a reader in Canada we also learn that Sack is now a resident of the Dominion, married, and still singing. Indications are that an appearance in New York, or any other American metropolis, would find a ready audience for the lady.*

Concerning Novàes

SIR: A lavish bouquet to you for thumping the drum of Guiomar Novàes. Heaven knows, someone should, and she'd be the last person to do so. Beloved among connoisseurs of piano artistry to an extent approached only by the equally unshowmanlike Benno Moiseiwitsch (how I would relish hearing these two in a Chopin duet!), recognition has been all too little and infrequent. . . . I second your motion for an early Novàes pressing of the hitherto unrealized Schumann "Carnaval" (Hess and Rachmaninoff notwithstanding!) . . .

JAMES G. CASTANO.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *A confirmed opinion is that Novàes thumps her drum by not thumping the piano. One instrument to a performer satisfies us. We are otherwise wholly in agreement with the sentiments as stated.*

Burke and Queen Anne

SIR: A twenty-one gun salute to C. G. Burke, not only for his acute remarks about the inadequacy of commercial machines and the problems of getting a good custom one [RECORDINGS, July] but also for his forbearance in not saying that they were as dead as the type he wrote about—namely, Queen Anne.

J. F. ROGERS.

Green Bay, Wis.

SIR: My friends and I think that the experiences of the author of "The Dethronement of Queen Anne" would profit many other persons interested in high-fidelity reproduction if they were available in book form.

WILLIAM P. GRACE.

Pasadena, Calif.

Bach's Eternal Validity

SIR: As the two hundredth anniversary of Bach's death on July 28, 1750, approaches, preparations are made on many sides and in all sorts of ways to commemorate it fittingly. Just why his contribution to musical art was so fundamental, so unparalleled, so all-pervading, is seldom seriously considered. There have been other great composers, but few whose work is so universally acclaimed as unique. One asks why. In order to realize to the full the greatness of his initiative it is well to ponder the words of a great modern philosopher. The essential uniqueness of all true artistic origination has been strikingly analyzed by Professor William Ernest Hocking. The following paragraph helps us to understand why, though Bach's physical life terminated two centuries ago, his music manifests eternal validity, and through it cumulative vitality:

> The freedom of decision has sometimes been pictured as a sort of mechanical coin-flipping to lend an arbitrary overweight to one of two balanced alternatives. This is as poor a version of decision as could well be conceived. The self, in deliberating, is not occupied with a common stock of conventional alternatives. Bach's music was not eternally laid up in heaven, and extracted by him from an endless store of pre-existing musical ideas: it was not so much as *possible* until Bach conceived it. This idle idea of an infinite grab-bag of eternal possibilities, from which finite deciders draw now a red ball, now a white, as pleases their fancy, assumes that no finite mind does more than reproduce and give flesh to a few of the infinite multitude of an eternal repertoire of universals; but the human will is not engaged in mere duplication. The field of alternative possibilities into which the self looks is first of all a field stocked by its own imagination, derived from a thousand sources and yet in every line its own product. It is impossible for two minds to contemplate the same concrete alternatives, though they be given the same names; for to each mind the alternatives become at once "what I can make of them." The world in which the deliberating mind operates is an "other" world with its own space-time order; it intends to superpose this imagined world, when its conception is satisfactory, upon the "actual" world, and in the act of decision construct a perfect splice! It confers actuality upon the dream of its own making. Thus Bach adds to the universe, when he pens his music, something which without his invention the universe would not have had and something which God himself had never thought.

The passage comes from the author's "Thoughts on Death and Life," published by Harper & Bros. in 1937.

DANIEL GREGORY MASON.

New York, N. Y.

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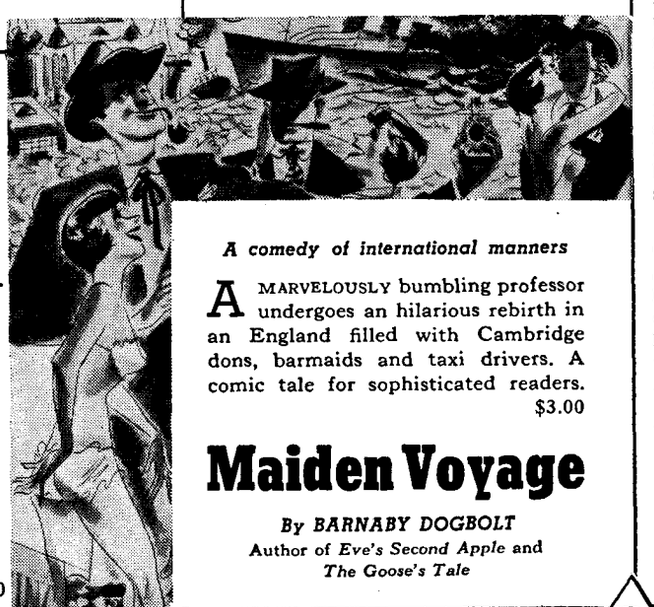

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COLUMN OF OUR OWN

PERHAPS this is the place to put in a word for some recently published books that seem to be delighting readers this summer. A few that come to mind are ALIVE IN THE BROWN STONE-AGE, in which B. A. Henry gives us a nostalgic and highly entertaining version of what it was like to grow up in the Yorkville section of New York City forty years ago; A MAN FROM SOUTH DAKOTA, George Reeve's account of a real farmer battling with a malevolent Nature and a benevolent Government; and Giuseppe Marotta's charming Neapolitan memoir, SAN GENNARO NEVER SAYS NO. The unusual illustrations by Labocetta are not the least attractive feature of this book.

SHAKESPEARE OF LONDON, NEXT WEEK—EAST LYNNE! and SCIENCE IS A SACRED COW have all gone into new printings. A recent review of the latter which appeared in a scientific publication made such a vivid impression on us that we believe it is worthy of wider circulation, and we quote: "The alarming fact about this book is not that it is so bad, but that so many lay reviewers think it is so good." P.S. We *still* think you will enjoy reading it!

ADVANCE Notice: RISE UP AND WALK, by Turnley Walker, will be published on August 11th. John Gunther, who read it in manuscript, describes it as "A tender and discerning book about the kind of faith and courage that overcomes a tragedy. Anyone who has suffered the ravages of illness, particularly those crippled by infantile paralysis, will find an inspiring message in this book." RISE UP AND WALK is a dual selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club for August.

IT looks as if our children's department has come up with the most exciting book of the year. And the most timely. You've probably been reading about hot rod driving, and you may have seen hot rods passing you on the highways. Well, Henry Gregor Felsen has written a book about one young hot rod driver, and it tells what happened to him and to his friends. It's titled HOT ROD, and it's aimed at all teen-age drivers — and their parents. It's so packed with suspense that to begin it is to read it, spell-bound to the end. It has just been published, it is highly endorsed by the National Safety Council, and it sells for two dollars.

DO you find modern poetry confusing and exasperating? Many people do. But if you are willing to give it one more chance, our candidate for your attention is BOW DOWN IN JERICHO. We believe it will persuade you that All Is Not Lost. Poet Reece's first book of poems, BALLAD OF THE BONES, went through four printings. And his first novel, BETTER A DINNER OF HERBS, was published last spring and pleased everyone who read it. We think you'll be hearing about Byron Herbert Reece — and about BOW DOWN IN JERICHO. E. P. D.

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